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No Advertisement can be thoroughly brought under the notice of the influential Mercantile and Agricultural classes of West Cumberland unless inserted in the *Whitehaven News*, which has a larger circulation than all the other Whitehaven Newspapers combined, the circulation extending to each of the following places, at nearly all of which there are Agents for the sale of the paper :—

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Out of Cumberland, the *News* is largely circulated amongst Cumberland residents in Liverpool, Dublin, and Cardiff. It is also circulated in Coniston, Kendal, Ulverston, and the mining district of Bishop Auckland.

THE WHITEHAVEN NEWS advocates social and political progress, the interests of agriculture, shipping, mining, and commerce, gives the foreign news briefly, the local intelligence fully, and is a political, literary, and family journal.

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HENRY AND MARY:

A LOCAL TALE,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE PECULIAR HABITS, CUSTOMS, AND DIVERSIONS

OF

THE INHABITANTS

OF THE

WEST OF CUMBERLAND,

DURING THE GREATER PART

OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND PRECEDING CENTURY.

[REPRINTED FROM "THE WHITEHAVEN NEWS."]

BY WILLIAM LITT,

AUTHOR OF "WRESTLIANA."

WHITEHAVEN:

MICHAEL AND WILLIAM ALSOP, 13, CROSS STREET.

MDCCCLX.

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Pierce fund

MICHAEL AND WILLIAM ALSOP, PRINTERS, CROSS STREET, WHITEHAVEN.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE tale of "Henry and Mary" was originally published in 1824. Notwithstanding it was published at a high price, the work met with a ready sale. Considering, however, that there might be many parties living now who had not had an opportunity of reading the tale, it was re-published in the *Whitehaven News*, from which it has been re-printed in its present form, at a price which places it within the reach of all classes.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

It is impossible for any work of this description to be dedicated with so much propriety to an individual as to its readers. The name of any particular friend or patron can neither enhance the reputation nor extenuate the incapacity of the author; and with respect to the public, those millions who do not read the book can have no candid reason, either to praise or censure its contents. In this short preface to the tale thus offered to the public, it is far from my intention to apologize for its imperfections: of them I am as fully sensible as those persons can be who may peruse it with a predetermined intention of pointing out faults, but who cannot be equally aware of the difficulties that are to encounter in the execution of a work of this nature, simply because no native of the West of Cumberland has hitherto ventured to brave them. I know that this publication has awakened considerable local curiosity, and will, therefore, be read by many, who, totally unacquainted with books of a similar description, cannot necessarily be supposed very capable of forming a correct judgment of this; and the majority of these, I scruple not to say, would probably have been better pleased had the deference due to others, and a just regard for my own reputation, permitted the free use of those homely phrases peculiar to the place which I have chose for the scene. To those readers who may find amusement equal to their expectation, no apology can be requisite; and to those who may feel disappointed, I can only be of service by reminding them, that a too sanguine disposition has often had more substantial reasons for regret. As for the tale itself, there is in reality more *truth* than *fiction*, even in those departments in which the imagination might plead a regular license to range free and boundless as the wind; and it is the regard I have observed for *real* dates and facts which prevented me from complying with the desire of several friends, who wished me to introduce in this story some anecdotes relative to the well known characters of Jemmy Dover and Johnny Rule. The prospect of these acquaintances of many of my local readers being particularly noticed by me in a future work of more modern date, will probably depend on the success of this, which, without either regular preface or dedication, I submit to the candour of that portion of the community who may choose to honour it with their perusal.

Hensingham, August 19, 1824.

THE AUTHOR.

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

As the increased publicity given to "Henry and Mary" in its republication has made Mr. Litt's name, for the time, almost as familiar in the mouths of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood as it was wont to be some half century ago, and as also the generation which knew him in the flesh is fast fading from amongst us, it may not be without interest to glance briefly at the somewhat chequered career of one whose memory will long be cherished in his native county, not only on account of his writings, but also as the prime patron and promoter of a noble and manly sport, and as the man who by his example, no less than by the eloquence of his advocacy, elevated a local pastime to a consideration and position that remind us not unworthily of the most palmy days of the Olympian stage.

William Litt was the youngest of four sons of John Litt, formerly of Bowthorn, and also of Netherend, near this town, and was born, we believe, at the former place, in the parish of Cleator, on the 8th of November, 1785. His father was a man of considerable standing in the neighbourhood, holding the office, a highly lucrative one for the time, of a Commissioner for the Inclosure of Waste Lands, and being also largely engaged in agricultural and mining pursuits. His children, therefore, had all the advantages that flow from a liberal education, and, naturally, the youngest son was not behind his brothers in this respect; but, on the other hand, was distinguished, even as a boy, for the extent of his literary acquirements. They who knew William

Litt in after life, as one of a circle of men of literary tastes and pursuits in Whitehaven which might have done honour to any town in England, will scarcely need to be told this; for even in that society he was alike remarkable for his learning as for his talent. Although, we believe, there was some intention on the part of his parents at one time that he should be brought up with a view to the pulpit, the bent of his early inclinations was such, and he was so passionately attached to athletic exercises and field sports of every description, that it was not deemed prudent to seek to force him to an avocation for which, however much he might be fitted by talent, he was certainly but little qualified in some other respects. Accordingly, his occupation, from the time of leaving school up to manhood, was principally that of agriculture; that is to say, he resided for the most part with his parents at Netherend, taking just what portion of the duties of the farm he pleased, and at such times as best suited his inclination or his convenience; in fact, leading what may be called rather a loose, gentlemanly kind of life. In after years he looked back on this period of his career with feelings of great pain, and attributed his subsequent misfortunes and want of success in life to the fact that the golden time of youth had been allowed to pass over so unprofitably, and to the circumstance that he had not been brought up to look forward to any particular occupation as a means of living. "I look upon it," says he, in a letter to a friend, written not many years before his death, "that the most important thing for youth is always to have some object in view, some aim and end, the attainment of which shall find occupation for both mind and body and to which everything else should be made subservient. I am satisfied my own failures and sorrows have all sprung from a want of this kind in early life."

His love of athletic exercises was naturally fostered by the kind of life he led in the country, and the society he was thus brought into contact with. Wrestling was, of course, then, as now, the favourite sport of the Cumberland peasantry, and into this he entered with all the ardour of youth and enthusiasm. His physical advantages enabled him to take a prominent position in such matters, and practice and science contributed to make him one of the finest wrestlers of his day. Nor did he feel the slightest hesitation at any time about entering the ring to compete with others. It mattered little whether the prize was great or small, he was ready to try his prowess against all comers, and

seldom failed of success. By his personal daring in this respect, and the example thus given, there can be little doubt he did much to elevate the character of the sport; and so successful was he himself in the practice of it, that a bare enumeration of his victories would occupy a larger space than we feel ourselves able to devote to the subject. One of these, however, can scarcely be passed over in this place, namely, his celebrated match with Harry Graham, of Brigham, at that time looked upon, in consequence of his defeat of the celebrated Tom Nicholson, as the finest wrestler in the county, which means, of course, *in the world*. He was matched against Mr. Litt, the best of eleven falls, for the sum of sixty guineas, at that time the largest sum that had ever been contended for in any ring in the north. The parties met under somewhat disadvantageous circumstances to Mr. Litt, who was so exceedingly unwell that he had solicited a postponement of the engagement. But this was not granted. Let our hero tell his own tale from the pages of "Wrestliana." "No wrestler," says he, "ever entered a ring in higher condition or with greater confidence than Harry, and his gaining the three first falls could not fail to increase the good opinion of his friends, as nothing but a most decisive victory could then be contemplated. But the loss of three falls, instead of depressing, only roused our energies. The listlessness which pervaded the whole frame at the commencement of the contest now gave place to the animated feeling arising from exercise and the situation in which we were then placed; and instead of the expected victory, Harry was somewhat obligated to fortune for one fall out of the other eight. Harry was some pounds the heavier man, but the advantages of length and strength were so much against him, that in the latter part of the contest it is well known he had not the slightest chance whatever." This contest took place on Arlecdon Moor, on the 26th of October, 1811.

Whilst indulging thus freely, however, in the amusements and exercises of the country, he was not seldom to be met with in the more polite recreations of the town. Equally at home in the most polished and in the rudest society, he was an especial favourite wherever he went, and at this period Whitehaven was perhaps more remarkable than at any other time for its literary society. Of these, alas! how few now remain! Gentle, gifted, eloquent Mc. Combe, poor "Harley," as his friends used to call him in those days, whose name is almost forgotten, but whom a few of our readers may still

remember, and must still revere; Wilson Ledger, the manly and independent editor of the *Liberal Gazette*, when Liberalism was a dangerous doctrine; Todd, the "Leander," whose name was once so familiar in the Poet's Corner of our newspapers, a powerful satirist, a man of great genius, and a true poet, with all the excitability and eccentricity of his order. "Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar?" The writer of this sketch knew you well, as the friends and associates of the author of "Henry and Mary" in days long past, and he cannot pass by the recollections thus called up without this feeble tribute to the memory of your genius and your worth! In such society as this a considerable portion of Mr. Litt's leisure was spent; and he was also at this time a frequent contributor to the pages of both the *Pacquet* and the *Gazette*, but more especially of the former, in which appeared occasional poetical sketches of singular beauty and merit from his pen. Indeed, it is much to be regretted that he did not at this time cultivate more deeply this power, and adopt more decidedly the profession of a writer for the periodical press. If he had made this the "aim and end" of which he afterwards spoke, there can be little reason to doubt, looking at the class of men whom we know to have often succeeded in such a pursuit, that he might have lived a much more useful, and certainly a much happier and more successful life.

About this period, however, Mr. Litt embarked for the first time in business, although with little success. He took a large brewery in Whitehaven—we forget exactly the locality, but it is of little consequence now—and invested a considerable capital in the trade. He received a fair share of patronage; but, as he refused nobody who thought proper to favour him with an order, it was not always of the most profitable kind. Suffice it to say, that his book debts soon became very heavy; and he discovered that it was certainly not as a manufacturer of ale and porter he was destined to make a fortune. He therefore abandoned the business altogether, having lost nearly the whole of his investment in little more than a twelvemonth, and returned once again to the more congenial occupations of the plough and the pen, with an occasional bout in the wrestling ring. *

But the time was approaching when something else must be done. In the year 1817 he married; and he had already two children when his father, whose large speculations had latterly been less than usually

successful, and who had further become involved in a heavy chancery suit, died, in the end of 1819; and the establishment at Netherend was consequently broken up. Left to his own resources, he turned naturally to literature, and a year or two later produced his well known "*Wrestliana*, or an Historical Account of Ancient and Modern Wrestling," a book which attained at once great popularity throughout Cumberland and Westmorland, and is still an especial favourite with all admirers of the sport. Nor were its merits unappreciated in high quarters. Professor Wilson wrote a long and genial critique on the work, in the pages of *Blackwood*, in which he treated it with unqualified praise. Other, though less powerful pens, did not hesitate to express their admiration, and the sporting world generally hailed the little book as a most valuable addition to their literature. The success of "*Wrestliana*" was, therefore, more than equal to its author's expectations.

It was probably this success that inspired our author to the publication, almost immediately afterwards, of a local tale "illustrative of the habits, customs, and diversions," to use his own words, "of the inhabitants of the West of Cumberland." The project was a congenial one enough to his taste, and he entered into it most heartily. The defects of the work are probably those which always mark more or less very hasty productions, and we happen to know that the sheets of Henry and Mary seldom had a second inspection from their author. Notwithstanding all this, it will be admitted that the story is highly interesting, and fairly illustrative of the object with which the author set out. But from the critics, it must be admitted, it did not meet with the same unqualified approval that had marked the publication of its predecessor.

For what particular reason we cannot stop to inquire, but Mr. Litt seems now to have abandoned all idea of literary pursuits; for, beyond occasional contributions, sometimes in prose and sometimes in verse, to the local newspapers, we hear no more of him as an author. He lived for the most part at Hensingham, holding some parochial offices, and expecting some long-promised consideration at the hands of the party always paramount in Whitehaven, and to which he had rendered important services. He was not, however, of the stuff that sycophants and successful place-hunters are made, and certainly should not have hoped, if he did hope, anything from their gratitude. Do we not all know that it is on what Thackeray calls the genus

"muff," as witness not only Whitehaven but everywhere else, that noblemen mostly shower their favours and their honours? And nobody will venture to say that William Litt was of this class. It is, however, too long a story to enter upon here, and there can little good come of raking up the ashes of things long forgotten. Pass on to the end.

The tale is soon told. The gradually-increasing embarrassment of Mr. Litt's circumstances, and the difficulties that everywhere seemed to hem him in at home, induced him to emigrate to Canada in the year 1832. Here, at Montreal and elsewhere, he entered somewhat largely into speculations as a contractor in the cutting of canals and the like, but with his usual want of success; and he fell back again, as in England, on his literary abilities. Writing for the press, however, is a still more precarious source of income in Canada than at home; and a more certain and easier mode of life was offered to him in the profession of a teacher, which he accepted, and the duties of which proved so agreeable that he continued to pursue them to the end. The last few years of his life were spent in the house of a Cumberland family of the name of Forster, at a place called La Chine, about nine miles distant from Montreal, where he died in the year 1847. For some time before his death, they who knew him best had observed a gradual failure of his intellectual powers. He did not appear to suffer from any particular disease, but died quietly and tranquilly of something like a general break-up of the system. Sixty-two, if may be said, is scarcely the age of natural decay; but in his case the constitution had been heavily tried in the fulness of his strength, and his long exile from all that were near and dear to him must necessarily have hastened the consummation. Be this as it may, the author of "Wrestliana" sleeps "the sleep that knows no breaking," far from the tombs of his fathers and the homes of his friends and his family.

"He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep."

In person, Mr. Litt possessed a rare combination of physical strength, with the most perfect symmetry of form. His height was about six feet, and his countenance and manner were manifestly thoughtful and pleasing. His conversational powers were also remarkable. His voice was singularly fine and powerful; and one accomplishment he possessed above all men we have ever known,—he was, without exception, the

very best *reader* we ever listened to. In the union of great personal courage and physical power with high intellectual attainments and natural talents, he bore no little resemblance to the celebrated Professor Wilson. Indeed, Wilson was rather proud to acknowledge the similarity, for he concludes his review of "*Wrestliana*" in these words :— "Should Mr. Litt ever visit Edinburgh, right happy shall we be to see him at Ambrose's. We are neither of us so young as we were ten or fifteen years ago, but we should like to see the man who could shove either the one or the other of us off the 'crown o' the cause-way' yet. And surely no better argument in favour of athletic exercises in general can be found than the fine, hale, hearty appearance which we both present, being most perfect specimens of what the poet has so concisely expressed in one line :—

'Mens sana in corpore sano.'

High praise this, it may be said, from one like the renowned Christopher North ; and with such a comparison, the most partial biographer might well be satisfied to conclude his task. More than this, the writer of these remarks feels that he is not the proper person to attempt any minute criticism of Mr. Litt's merits as an author. Wordsworth says of the hero of his great poem :—

"Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least ; else surely this man had not left
His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed."

This observation of the poet does not apply in all its force to the subject of our memoir, for he has left behind him much that his own country, at least, will not willingly let die. But we cannot close this hasty sketch of the life and character of William Litt, without an expression of our feeling, that he was certainly capable of much more than he ever accomplished, and that it is impossible to speak, even with the utmost partiality, of what he *was* without at the same time some sentiment of regret for what he *might have been*.

HENRY AND MARY.

The village of Arlecdon stands nearly equidistant between the populous town of Whitehaven and that lofty range of mountains which divides the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. This situation naturally combines the salubrity of the sea air with the invigorating breezes of those hills which form a semicircle with the Solway Frith, and thus nearly surround it at such distances as tend to modify, by the fertility of those valleys over which they are wafted, the disagreeable keenness of the winds, which blow incessantly from either one or the other. The advantages arising from this central situation, both in point of health and convenience, have no doubt had their due influence in giving so otherwise insignificant a place the appellation of a village, and dignifying it with a church which characteristics naturally caused it to be considered the head of that parish which retains the same name. Arlecdon, though somewhat increased in extent since 1760, is still more so in consequence; its name, at least, is now better known throughout the United Kingdom, by being twice to be found in the usual catalogues of annual fairs, a distinction to which at that time it possessed no claim whatever.

The proximity of Cumberland to the coasts of Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, and its direct communication with them by means of the Solway Frith, which subjected it in times immemorial to irregular hostile incursions, has, since the firm establishment of those laws equally protecting persons and property, which are now duly enforced in the remotest corners of the kingdom, been proportionally conducive to the population and consequent improvement of this district. The effects of this change, however, prove it to have been both regular and progressive, and the date of its commencement may easily be traced to the period of the union between England and Scotland. That important event first enabled the settled population of this district to calculate with some degree of security upon reaping the fruits of their labour; and from that time forward, the peaceful and secluded lives of the inhabitants of detached cottages and small inland hamlets and villages were only interrupted by occasions which

required reciprocal acts of assistance to prove mutually advantageous, or occasionally enlivened by resorting to those particular places which were annually the scene of rural diversions and athletic exploits. The consequence of this seclusion was, that throughout the inland parts of Cumberland the inhabitants of every small district became possessed of a peculiar local idiom of their own, which sounded strange and uncouth even at a few miles distance, and in some instances was scarcely understood in remote parts of the county. The great importance of those valuable seams of coal which abound in the northern parts of the county and are bounded by the Frith, and the consequent improvement of the towns along that range of coast, naturally contributed to encourage numerous settlers from all the kingdoms which compose the Union; and this mingled influx of adventurers and their descendants, principally confined at first to the populous towns and their immediate neighbourhoods, spread imperceptibly further into the interior, and carrying with them the seeds of progressive alterations in dress, habits, manners, and provincial and local idioms, the West of Cumberland gradually arrived at that state of improved civilization, and perfection in the science of agriculture and the art of commerce, of which it may boast at the present time. It is true, indeed, that with the tide of prosperity and increased riches, some of those peculiar hospitable and local customs which distinguished the days of our forefathers have nearly disappeared; but whatever prejudices may yet remain in favour of those which are obsolete, they must be strong indeed if they form any counterpoise to the great advantages of unlimited security and intellectual and religious improvement now everywhere too apparent to be mistaken.

To no place throughout the United Kingdom are those lines of Goldsmith more applicable than to this part of Cumberland, where

“ — Even the peasant boasts his rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man ;”

And in scarcely any other place are there the same existing reasons why it should be so. By the frequent intermarriages between the original inhabitants, and the successive emigrants, or settlers, and their descendants, are sprung a race of people amongst whom, without any deviation from their characteristic bravery, are blended the fiery temper of the Welshman and the vivacity of the Irishman, with the distant reserve of the Englishman, and the cool calculating prudence of the Scotchman. Such a people, while they will be the last to withhold that due respect for superior rank and fortune which they are entitled to expect, will ever be the first to distinguish that respect from servility, and to resist any encroachment upon their rights as free-born Englishmen.

Sixty years ago, if more hospitality was practised at particular seasons, an alarming disregard to religious instruction was universally apparent. After the strongholds of Popery were trampled under foot, the great latitude of individually thinking and acting allowed in the Protestant Church was carried to an extreme bordering on licentiousness, from which at that period it scarcely had begun to recover. It cannot be supposed that so much bigotry, or even devotion, would be found in a district like this, progressively advancing in

population by adventurers from different places seeking to improve their circumstances, as in the inland counties and towns where property was more fixed, and the inhabitants more localized. To prevent that fanaticism which he considered pregnant with danger to his government from taking deep root, King James published a Book of Sports, the chief tendency of which was to recommend all kinds of pastimes and diversions immediately after hearing sermons; this accorded with the indulgence yet allowed in Roman Catholic countries on Sunday afternoons, and is a sufficient cause for wrestling, football-playing, and other games, being practised at that time. On the final establishment of the Protestant religion in the West of Cumberland, these practices were still preserved in their full vigour; and many curates, and even rectors of small parishes, were no mean adepts in these athletic exhibitions. When such was the practice in the afternoon, we cannot suppose there was much excess of devotion in the morning; and accordingly it is a well-authenticated fact, that a rector of Arlecdon actually left his pulpit for the purpose of bestowing manual correction on one of his parishioners, whom he conceived was then insulting him. The surplice, however, proved such an impediment to his usual lightness of foot, that his intended victim, after a severe chase, effected his escape, and for that time eluded the chastisement intended for him by his spiritual pastor. The imposition of heavy duties, and their inequality between the two kingdoms, gave likewise great encouragement to the pursuit of contraband trade; and some of the desperate characters who subsisted by it, scrupled not occasionally to make free with the property of others, with an impunity scarcely credible at this time, when similar outrages are very properly punished with the utmost rigour of the law.

It was during this comparative laxity of manners, or it was in 1760, that Arlecdon Moor for the first time became the scene of those rural amusements and athletic exploits for which it was afterwards so famous. At Kelton Fell races, in the summer of that year, it chanced that Tommy Aldersey, from the Abbey Holm, was not altogether satisfied with his favourite grey horse Jumper being named only second best for the purse given on that occasion; a circumstance he attributed, in some degree, to the partiality of the stewards and the sharp turns and inequalities of the race course. He therefore challenged Jack White, of Muncaster, to run his chesnut mare Jessy, for the important sum of five pounds each, on any other ground in the neighbourhood, where these impediments might be avoided. Jack was nowise averse to the match, and the bonifaces from Lamplugh, Arlecdon, Ennerdale Bridge, and Cleator being laudably awake to their own interests, through their interference the match was finally determined to be run on Arlecdon Common, the said landlords agreeing to stake out the ground, and to remove such obstacles as might prove detrimental to the rival racers; and furthermore, to select umpires to assist them in collecting a sum sufficient to procure those necessary and usual appendages to a horse race, viz., a belt to wrestle for, a hat to run for, and a pair of gloves to leap for.

Very early in the afternoon of the last Saturday in July, 1760, the same piece of ground, long afterwards resorted to on similar occasions.

bore inevitable tokens of the approaching contest. Then for the first time was the centre of Arlecdon Common decorated with sail-cloth, managed so as to bear remote resemblance to a tent, under which the water of life, from ale to blue dick, and the imports from distant parts, were to be procured; and there, too, had the proprietors of gingerbread-stalls, skittles, hit-my-legs and miss-my-pegs, arranged their several wares and implements, ready for the expected company to indulge themselves according to their different inclinations. As the afternoon advanced, the scene became more animated, lively, and picturesque. On every side of the appointed scene of action were seen groups of rustics, decorated in their best, winding through the paths formed amidst the rough ling and heather; while far as the eye could distinguish to the eastward, small parties alternately visible and obscured by the wood, or different turnings in the roads, were seen directing their course to the common, down the gradual declivity leading from Lamplugh; while on the paths which lead to Egremont and Whitehaven several individual stragglers and indiscriminate companies, some tramping along, and others exalted on horse-back, were seen hastening to join the general rendezvous. By four o'clock an immense concourse of people had assembled on the ground; and while the youngsters, as is their wonted custom, were amusing themselves in different exercises, those arrived at maturity were occasionally gallanting their sweethearts, joining the more aged in witnessing the exploits of their juniors, or descanting on the merits of Jumper and Jessy, both of which, gaily caparisoned in cloth, were slowly traversing the ground, to the intent of getting better acquainted with it.

Among those whose arrival seemed to attract a more than ordinary degree of notice was a small party advancing from the neighbouring hamlets of Eskat and Winder. This consisted of Robin Armstrong, a farmer from the borders, but who had that spring removed to Salter; his son and daughter, and his brother-in-law and nephew, Richie and Tommy Foster, whose residence was in that district of which it is provincially observed, though doubtless with much exaggeration, "That very few of the children know where their fathers are buried." These last two had arrived at Salter the preceding day to arrange some private business of their own, but the seemingly ostensible object was to inquire after Robin's welfare, and to bring home his daughter Mary, who had been residing with them during the spring; and who, as well as her uncle and cousin, was consequently a total stranger to nearly the whole of the assembled multitude. Of this small party it is difficult to say whether the beauty of the young and unknown female, or the muscular and athletic appearance of her uncle, who appeared quite in his proper element, attracted the more observation. Richie Foster was a man who, from a mere stripling, had delighted in athletic exploits; and even yet, though considerably past that time of life in which such exercises are pursued with avidity, so vain of the excessive strength he still possessed, and for which he had been remarkably distinguished, that though numbering more than forty years, he could not be restrained from occasionally entering the ring against 'y noted champion of the day. He had likewise been renowned

for leaping and running; but that elasticity so indispensably requisite for excelling in these two exercises had long deserted him, although his gigantic strength still rendered him a most formidable opponent to wrestle with. His height seemed about six feet, and a life of hardy and vigorous exercise, while it had yet preserved his strength unimpaired, had had the same effect upon his weight, which was nearly sixteen stones. His arms were long and muscular, his shoulders broad and athletic, and corresponded with a frame of equal strength and symmetry from head to foot; and while his face bore indubitable tokens of middle age, his keen dark eyes seemed animated with all the fire and ardour of undiminished manhood. It was by no means Richie Foeter's foible to think detractingly of himself; and therefore, full of that self-importance which arises from a knowledge of superior powers, and almost uninterrupted success, and extremely vain of his son's prowess, who, though not ever likely to possess the strength of his father, was nevertheless a tall sinewy youth, he seemed to anticipate the satisfaction he would enjoy on his return home, when relating their triumphs over the best men in that part of the country where his brother Robin had taken up his residence.

The first thing after the arrival of a party at a fair, horse race, or similar place of amusement, is, generally, to seek the inside of a tent, as there you may enjoy at your leisure the triple conveniences of rest, liquor, and a full discussion of the business of the day; and although in this instance the first plea was but a trifling inducement to any of the party, yet neither of the elder were by any means indifferent to the sweets of the two latter. Indeed, the three young ones would have preferred rambling about, and amusing themselves amongst the motley assemblage; but this, for the present, was frustrated by a still common, yet mistaken notion of politeness: either of the seniors would have dispensed with their own offspring, but Robin's hospitality was too much in question to permit Tommy's absence; and Richie was equally strenuous in regard to his nephew, and therefore a visit to the inside of a tent was rendered totally indispensable. On Robin's looking round to ascertain whose temporary encampment commanded the best view of the scene of action, he suddenly exclaimed, "See, brother, yonder gangs that deevil's journeyman, Kadge Brown, and lang Tom Westray, of Hensingham, the vara men we were talking about!" As these personages were of the most doughty order of beings, and well acquainted where the best brandy and real farintosh were to be had, our party presently joined them in the tent of good Harry Jenkinson, of Arlecdon, an appellation by no means so honourable to the individual in question as many of my readers will be apt to imagine; as deeming it, either coincident with his general character, roused to distinguish the said Harry from a worse of the same name. Now, though nothing is further from my intention than personal detraction, yet the truth must be told. Comparison was, sixty years ago, quite familiar in this part of Cumberland, and was frequently used to distinguish persons of the same name from each other, in like manner as the place of abode was referred to in Scotland, and many other places. "A distinction," says my venerable and respected friend, William Graham, the sage of Mockerkin, "conclu-

sive of the superior grammatical attainments and natural critical acumen of the inhabitants of this district over the thievish borderers, amongst whom the scandalous and unwarranted epithets of 'Cumberland Jwohn,' and 'Cumberland Gowk,' first originated." Therefore, although the term *good* could not in any instance (irony apart) be considered detrimental, yet in the present case it was not so much a recommendation, as a proof of the kind and considerate character of our forefathers; for of three individuals of the same name, *good* Harry Jenkinson ranked lowest in general estimation, the others being equally known by the higher appellatives of *better* and *best*.

The inside of good Harry's tent was furnished with planks, ranged in different directions, and raised to the necessary height for seats, by occasional supports formed of turf, which served very well for the accommodation of a succession of customers, who, fond of noise and good humour, were either busily engaged in passing jokes on each other, or descanting on the approaching sports. On the subject of the match, opinions were nearly equally divided; and bets from pints to gallons, and sometimes a dry shilling, were freely sported by many of the company, each supporting his favourite steed; and as few things occurred perfectly indifferent to Richie Foster, he was not long in sporting a bowl of brandy punch upon Jumper, merely because he came from the same side of the county, a circumstance which more than any other had a wonderful influence in determining the partiality of the betters, as it was a generally expressed assertion that they would rather lose than be seen betting against their own side.

The person with whom Richie Foster wagered his brandy was no other than the above-mentioned Kadgie Brown, a man who may perchance yet live in the recollection of some of my aged readers. Brown, though then in the decline of life, still retained those characteristics for which he had been distinguished through a long period of predatory villainy. His limbs might truly be said to be "cast in giant mould," and corresponded with a frame which yet seemed to vouch for that strength of constitution which had enabled the possessor so long to persevere in such habits of profligacy and debauchery as few men could have survived. His low broad forehead was partly covered with locks of the dirtiest black, which nearly reached to thick bushy eye-brows of the same colour, and assisted to shade a pair of dull and malignant grey eyes, one of which was distinguished by a peculiar and disagreeable squint. To these particulars, if the reader will imagine a long and prominent chin, a wide mouth, well studded with teeth thoroughly tinged by an immoderate use of tobacco, a broad flattish nose, and high cheek bones, he will have some idea of the external appearance of Kadgie Brown, a nickname which his wandering and unsettled mode of life had procured him in his youth, and which the deeds of his latter years had by no means tended to abolish; though few, except his intimate acquaintance, were hardy enough to brave his resentment by using it in his hearing, for his ire was swift, his hatred implacable, and his revenge stimulated by a heart as daring as his means of mischief were many and powerful. Both Armstrong and Foster had, when mere lads, known Brown when in the prime of manhood, but the awe with

which a character so powerful and daring is generally regarded was completely dissipated in respect to the latter, whose own courage and prowess, nothing inferior to what Brown could ever boast, taught him to despise the danger which might arise from offending a man whose powers were on the decline; and Richie's volubility over his cups was often so offensive to Brown, that nothing but a consciousness of his inferior strength and the connexion subsisting between them, could have induced him either to suppress his resentment or continue to associate with him on any terms whatever. Richie's aptitude to express every conceit of the moment seldom suffered him to reflect on the consequence of what he was going to say; and he now, without the least intention of affronting Brown, observed, that if he won his brandy he would bet him another bowl, more if the prizes went east; for Tommy should both leap and wrestle; and for matter of that, his own time of day was sufficient for such a border grip as would let the best of them know what o'clock it was; and, turning to Brown, instantly added, "What thinkest thou of that, Kadgie?" "I think," replied Brown, nettled, as well at the appellation so publicly given, and which he saw had excited the suppressed titter of many of the company, as at the freedom with which he was treated, "that if no brandy travels over thy tongue till yonder gloves and belt are either Tom's or thine, thou mayest take to blue-dick whenever thou likest, for brandy thou art likely to want for the remainder of thy life." "What! crusty, old boy!" rejoined his antagonist, "but nevertheless I will abide whatever wager thyself shall propose, as to one or both of yonder playthings; a set to be reckoned a draw, and Robin here shall be judge between us." "Agreed," replied Brown, in a tone only audible to their own party, and anxious to propose something that might tend to allay the dispute. "Let our wager be the profits of the first cask of brandy that travels eastward duty free." To this Foster readily acquiesced; and then turning to Westray, asked him, "If he knew how many wrestlers Brown could procure to make his wager the better?" adding at the same time, with a significant look, "That whoever they were they should have reason to know him again without looking two ways at once." "Nay, Richie," said Westray, archly, "It is not fair to be continually reminding Rob here (the real surname of Brown) of the superiority of his eyesight; but with regard to your wager, it will not be in numbers, but on one man only that he relies for winning." "Then, prithee tell me who it is. Were he as high as a church, and as strong as a castle, I promise thee he would have his work to do." "Nay," said Westray, "he is neither the one, nor the other; but 'speak of the devil and he will appear' what thinkest thou of yon stripling in the drab coat and velveteen breeches? for he is the undisputed champion of this neighbourhood, I assure thee."

The eyes of the whole party were instantly directed towards the young man whom Westray had thus pointed out, and who happened just at that time to be walking leisurely in front of the tent. To Robin and Walter he was partially known; but to Richie and his son he was of course a total stranger. After strictly eyeing him till he had passed the tent, the sturdy borderer exclaimed,

"Truly, it is a well-made strapping youth! but mark me, lads; he wants timber; and hear ye, Sir Rob, if thou likest that title better, I care not if I double the wager, that if it so falls out, Tommy here does him his turn, if they come first together." "I will spare Rob the trouble," replied Westray, "one bet is sufficient for him; and, therefore, I will stand your second proposal, that Tom neither wins the gloves nor throws Harry Clementson." "Nay, Westray," said young Foster, eagerly, "my father shall stand his bet with Kadgie, and I will accept of thine; as probably yonder young fellow is a graft either from his stock or thine own." "Enough said, cousin," observed young Armstrong, "but as ye love quietness, bridle your tongue respecting yon said youth! for should he hear such an allusion respecting him, he would probably deem it no great honour, and there would quickly be the devil to play." "Tush, lad," rejoined the other, "I value him not a straw; let him like it or not, I—" "Nay, Tom," exclaimed Walter, cutting him short, "do not misunderstand me! Harry is by no means quarrelsome, but let me forewarn you, he will brook no insult; and as to your wager, though I heartily wish you success, yet I would not for double the sum insure you of either prize. But come, what is the use of sitting here so long? Mary has been weary for some time. The horses are drawing up to the starting post, and the sports are ready to commence. So, father, pay the shot, and let us see what is going forward." To this the whole party agreed, and, quitting *good* Harry Jenkinson's tent, issued together upon the now crowded common.

On the Common matters seemed fast approaching to a crisis. The horses were saddled, brought up to the post, and started amidst the mingled acclamations of an immense crowd, whose eager curiosity to see them off had collected to that particular spot, and who now as quickly dispersed to endeavour to attain those situations which commanded the first view of the horses, when having run round the southern extremity of the course which is not visible from the starting post, they burst upon the expected view of the anxious spectators.

The pleasure derived from witnessing a country horserace are many and varied; and although what may be termed the most polished part of the spectators may be indifferent to any event previous to the starting of the horses, yet this is far from being the case with respect to the majority of the rural and villatic part of the assemblage. With them everything associated with the subject is a source of undissembled satisfaction. The very anticipation of the day serves to amuse the mind and shorten the fatiguing labours of the season; and when it is fixed, its approach is linked with so many imaginary sources of enjoyment that every idea of personal endurance in the meantime is completely absorbed in the boundless prospect before them; and on the journey to the all-important place the face of the rustic continues to brighten as the distance diminishes. When arrived there, the pleasure he experiences is almost exclusively his own, as it is an undoubted fact that the delights of social life are highest appreciated by those whose means of enjoying them are confined within narrow limits. He is now a partaker of the rights, and feels the consequence of being a free-born Englishman. The master

of his own actions, he can leisurely wander about as fancy dictates, and enjoy, to him, the new and supreme pleasures of meeting acquaintances, hearing news, or engaging in some of the various amusements such a scene generally affords on a fine summer evening, amusements which, invigorated by that lightness of heart which springs from the consciousness of being at least tolerably dressed, and master of his own actions, are peculiarly gratifying to those accustomed to the hard labour of a country life. But to return to Jumper and Jessey.

Twice did these renowned coursers circle round the allotted space, and as often was their arrival hailed by their respective admirers; but on the third and last round an unexpected incident was doomed to prevent either of their proprietors from being five pounds richer. Jessey, which was leading at the time, seemed to think, that if gallop she must, it might as well be towards home; and therefore when she should have crossed the beaten track leading towards Egremont, she manifested a decided preference to try her speed upon it; and the horse, which had hitherto hung purposely in her rear, had no objection to follow, and as the race was catch-weight, the riders, two young light boys, found considerable difficulty in enforcing a due obedience to the reins. The cry of "Run away" resounded on all sides, and the interested spectators, young and old, horse and foot, made the best of their way towards that side of the common. In this situation were things when Tommy Aldersey's grey yoad, urged by the remonstrances of his rider, began to recollect that he was running from home, and became more tractable; and the mare, no longer hearing him at her heels, began to swerve towards the left about, but not before the horse was so far gone as seemed to put the result of the heat out of all manner of doubt. It has often been remarked that "A bad beginning makes a good ending," but this was doomed to be a race of irremediable blunders. The boy who rode the horse, thinking himself perfectly secure, and having regained the course, looked behind him to see what had become of his more unlucky competitor; and the horse, left for the moment to his own discretion, seemed to prefer the inside of a small ash twig, which served to mark the boundary of the course between the principal posts. Thus the boy was too late in perceiving altogether to prevent, and in endeavouring to do so the horse went directly over it, broke it down, and sustaining no injury, held on his course, and was loudly cheered as the victor on his arrival at the goal. The other boy, who was at that time sufficiently near to witness the circumstance, kept outside the prescribed bounds; and having completed his distance, lost no time in asserting his claim to the heat, on the ground of his adversary's having run inside the course. All was now a tumultuous scene of uproar and confusion. On strict examination, it appeared from the broken twig, and the marks of the horse's feet, that he had gone neither outside nor inside; and this circumstance, which might have puzzled more competent judges to determine, was, as is usual, construed by each of the contending parties in their own favour; as one party maintained it was always the custom for the horses to keep outside of all marks or boundaries whatever, and that in the present case, this was the intention of those who

staked out the course, and which it clearly appeared had been violated, insomuch as the marks of the horse's near side feet were indisputably inside of the stump of the twig which yet remained in exactly the same place in which it had been driven by the umpires; while the other as strenuously insisted that the unfortunate twig had nothing to do with the course, as it was only placed as a temporary mark to inform the jockies which was the best and nearest direction to the principal posts, and that even if it had been one of these indispensables, the ground was the ground, and that, consequently, in strict justice, if the horse could have broke, and had preferred breaking down *all* the posts, they stood exactly in the course measured out, and which was, or ought, according to agreement, to have been an exact mile, it was entirely at his option to have done so. All argument, however, served but to render them more obstinate; neither would they listen to any mitigation of their full claim, and treated with derision a proposal made by the most moderate on both sides to run the heat over again. Amidst this tide of conflicting opinions, Richie Foster rendered himself very conspicuous. Naturally positive and overbearing in his disposition, he not only loudly challenged, but threatened any of the other party that ventured to contradict him; and fixing upon Henry Clementson as the person who had first proposed another trial, he clenched his fist, and dared him to a repetition of his proposal. Henry was the last, and perhaps the only person present, to brook such an insult. He called Richie a busy, bullying scoundrel, declared his intention of teaching him better manners, and scarcely could his brother-in-law restrain him from putting his threats into execution; while it required all the strength of the small number of Foster's acquaintances to prevent him from becoming the first aggressor. By degrees, however, the passions of all partly subsided. Three arbitrators were chosen by the joint parties, who, after duly weighing the matter, as both refused to run over again, determined that each should receive his own money back again. This knotty point being at length adjusted, the great majority resumed their good humour; and even those interested seemed in nowise displeased. As far as an impartial judgment could be formed, the termination of the contest seemed quite uncertain; and although we regard the act of receiving to be unquestionably the most pleasant circumstance attending a wager, as however trifling it enables us to laugh at our more unlucky sporting acquaintance, and compliment our own knowledge at their expense; yet, *vice versa*, to lose our cash and be laughed at is undoubtedly far worse than an equal draw; and perhaps, after all, the pleasure of witnessing a horserace is something like the effect of a shower-bath upon a nervous patient, the benefit of which is said to consist, not in merely being wet, but in the effect produced upon the body by the first fall of water; so in like manner, the real consequence may not be very material, if that pleasure arises from the ardent excitation of the mind: for said Janet Anderson, who attended the races with real Sanquhar stockings of all sizes, "Man, sirs! it was an unco' and a fearfu' race. The tane galloped, and the tither galloped, and nowther wan the siller!"

But whatever disappointment this unexpected termination of the

match might occasion, the contests for the other prizes seemed to promise ample amends. The eastern runners were beaten for the hat by long-winded Robinson, of Pardshaw, who, it was said, could run two miles in nine minutes and a half, and was never fairly beat. For the gloves the competitors were numerous; but after the first round of leaps, (three being allowed), they dwindled to Tommy Foster, Robinson, and Henry Clementson, the last having entered the lists contrary to his pre-determined intention, on account of his dispute with the elder Foster, whose previous conversation respecting him had been frequently repeated, and had certainly lost nothing in the conveyance. In leaping first in the second round, Henry, to the astonishment of his friends who had calculated far otherwise, barely surpassed the mark of Foster, who had leapt pretty well out on his first trial; while the other two, who had fully prepared themselves for action, went nearly two feet over it. On tossing up for the last go, the choice rested with Henry, who chose the last leap. The other two exerted themselves to the utmost, and with nearly equal success; the advantage, however, was supposed to rest with Tommy, who strenuously insisted upon the point, and which Richie was preparing to maintain with his usual ardour, when Henry stepped forward to leap, which Westray observing, desired him to be patient, as there would not be the least occasion for any dispute. Foster's looks were again stedfastly fixed upon the youth, who, without any emotion, having measured the distance with his eye, stepped to the rival marks, and placing his hat (the only part of his dress he seemed to think necessary to disencumber himself of on this occasion), walked back to the place marked out to spring from, and apparently without any extraordinary effort cleared the hat with the utmost ease; an exploit which occasioned loud shouts of approbation, and grins of delight from the neighbouring swains, while Richie immediately turned quietly away, exclaiming, "Wha the h—l ever saw the like o' that!"

The wrestling now commenced. The ring, as pointed out to me by a veritable old gentleman now no more, but who acted as umpire on that occasion was formed precisely upon that quiet plot of ground where many a succeeding hero has renewed an unwilling acquaintance with his mother earth; and where a few, to whom fortune has proved more favourable, have been cheered with the smiles of victory. Hail! scene of exalted triumphs, immortalized in the pages of *Wrestliana*, long shalt thou live in my remembrance! What though the green tops of the best of vegetables now wave over the place where the mighty have fallen! What are they to the laurels which have been acquired on the green sward? And what, though the most generous of grain, a thing not to be calculated upon, shall hereafter brave the severity of winter, flourish in the spring, ripen in the summer, and, mellowed by the suns of autumn, recline at last a glorious burthen upon thy bosom! Yet what is all this to those sensitive thrills of delight, which, emanating from thy listed ring, have made hundreds forget for a time there was such a thing as eating, or even drinking, in existence?

In the first round Richie Foster laid such violent hands on Allan Singleton, a reputed strong man from Egremont, that it was per-

fectly evident very few would run the risk of a similar grip. Tommy, however, very cleverly vanquished in the first and second rounds two of nearly the best wrestlers upon the ground; and it became apparent that excepting Henry Clementson no other stander would hazard a contest with either of them. Henry as yet had undergone no trial, his opponents withdrawing their names; but early in the third round, on being called with Thomas Foster, an universal feeling of intense anxiety seemed to prevade the ring. Tommy eagerly prepared himself for the contest, listening in the meantime to the well-meant advice of his father; and deficient neither in courage nor confidence, dwelt not a moment on the superiority manifest to the knowing spectators between him and his opponent. Tommy, though nearly as tall and heavy as Henry, had the appearance of a well-proportioned lad under twenty years of age; while Henry possessed the firm sinews and close-knit frame of a man of twenty-four. His form was symmetry itself. His dark-brown hair carefully tied behind, and gracefully curling forward, added considerably to the dignity and sweetness of his open forehead and lively blue eyes. The lower part of his face was equally well proportioned, and looked as far removed from effeminate indulgence as that unnatural flush which is the most certain indication of frequent excess. His step was light, graceful, and active; and his whole figure was generally deemed a model of manly beauty. Nor in those essential requisites which constitute a man, and distinguish him as the favourite work of his Creator, was he anything inferior to his external appearance. His courage was of the very first order; undaunted to an extreme, but at the same time cool and circumspect. He had rapidly profited by an education rather superior to what was in those times deemed necessary for men in his circumstances; and his general character and behaviour was such as to make him greatly beloved by the majority of his acquaintance. In athletic exercises he was deemed unrivalled; but, except as in the present case, he had declined entering the ring, for about home his superiority was too well known to make his winning be considered any augmentation of his prowess. When young Foster was ready, Henry, instantly laying aside his hat, coat, and shoes, advanced to meet him. Tommy seemed rather difficult to please respecting his hold, but his antagonist's offers were so perfectly fair that little dispute occurred respecting it. Foster instantly made vigorous play. He struck with his right foot, and attempted to follow it up with his left side. Being baffled in the first by Henry's wrenching himself at the moment from his hold, and planting himself firmly upon the ground, the second effort was fatal to him; for his opponent stopping him when half turned, closed his hands under his short ribs, and threw him lightly backwards on the ground. Tommy made no dispute respecting the fall, but expressed himself extremely anxious for another trial for a shilling bowl of punch, to which the other readily agreed; and as soon as a second hold was taken, Henry made play without ceremony, and gathering Tommy, struck him so quickly and effectively on the outside of the leg, that, quitting his hold, he fell a considerable distance, his shoulders being the first part of him that touched the ground. As the result was anticipated by all Henry's friends, the fall occasioned comparatively

little sensation. The conqueror walked quietly away as if nothing had happened; while the other, now perfectly conscious of his inferiority, when Westray provokingly reminded him of his wager, replied, "He was content to lose it: for he was satisfied yon chap was not a blood drop to him, for he was sure he was completely master of all Westray's breed, seed, and generation."

The defeat of his son had considerable effect upon Richie Foster, who, however anxious to do so, could not so much suppress his concern but that the penetrating eye of young Armstrong readily perceived it, and would gladly have persuaded him to have relinquished the contest, alleging, that now, when Tommy was thrown, his time of life was a sufficient excuse for doing so without incurring any reflection from the candid spectators, who would naturally imagine he had entered his name merely to assist his son, if they chanced to come together; and now, as he had fallen honourably, there was no occasion for proceeding further. This advice was gall to the proud soul of Richie; while the visible prowess of Henry, which rendered him more petulant and sulky, evidently disconcerted him. Not that he wanted courage, or was afraid of the man he had recently insulted; but for nearly the first time in his life he felt those apprehensions of disgrace which generally prognosticate defeat. In this round, as in the former, his man refused to encounter him; and in the fourth, when called against Clementson, the half-suppressed clamours of the crowd considerably damped his accustomed ardour. Conscious, however, that the eyes of the whole multitude were fixed upon him, he prepared himself for the contest with apparent indifference; though internally cursing that vanity which threw him in the way of so formidable a competitor, and had not Brown maliciously reminded him of his wager, he probably would have listened to the suggestions of Walter, and declined a trial for which he before seemed so anxious. The appearance of Richie Foster when stripped for action was truly formidable. His sinewy limbs fully denoted his excessive strength, and his rough hempen shirt thrown open on his shoulders freely displayed his thick, though finely-proportioned neck; while his ample chest and breast, partly covered with black wiry hair, contributed to impress such an idea of tremendous bodily powers upon the spectators, that the most confident of Henry's admirers trembled for the issue. Still, however, as the combatants, perceiving each other ready, advanced slowly to the centre of the ring, the good judges failed not to remark, that the superior strength of the one was fully balanced by the youth and activity of the other. Henry himself seemed equally confident and indifferent as on his former trial. He had indeed thought proper to make these precautionary preparations, requisite for assisting him to elude the dreadful gripe of his antagonist; but there was the same animated smile in his countenance, and the same alacrity in his endeavours to adjust the hold, as if he had had a mere commoner to encounter: and after mutual trials for accommodation, during which a tolerable idea of the powers and intentions of an opponent may be discovered; when his eyes accidentally met those of his particular friends, there was in them that peculiar expression which clearly indicated he felt him-

self perfectly at home. Richie, on the contrary, fully consciously at his only reliance was his superior strength, endeavoured to procure as low a hold of his opponent as he possibly could; and when he offered to take the first hold, pinned Henry's right arm down to his ribs, and grasped him so forcibly to his breast, as to elicit loud tokens of disapprobation from the crowded ring, which, if he at all regarded, served but to render him more obstinate in continuing to exact such a hold as to render futile the superior action of his fairer and more agile rival. Henry, perfectly aware of his intentions, regulated his own action accordingly. He took a slight hold of Richie's back, stood as far out as he thought his stubborn rival would permit him, and offered his own body to his opponent's grasp in a manner which it is impossible for him to refuse with any show of moderation, and stood ready to avail himself of his opponent's meditated plan of operations. Richie now seemed perfectly satisfied. He instantly laid hold, and endeavoured to draw his antagonist close up to him. Henry resisted this attempt for a moment, in order to give a more violent effect to the reversed movement of rapidly throwing the weight of his body forward, and striking his opponent's heel at the same instant, a mode of acting to which even Richie's strength was auxiliary, for instead of meeting with the resistance he expected, the suddenness of the reversed change made it impossible for him to preserve his equilibrium; and accordingly the instant his heel was struck he fell violently backward, but in the act of falling threw his hands loose, and thereby enabled his successful adversary to go lightly over, instead of falling heavily upon him. To describe the electrical effect this scientific performance had upon the immense multitude is impossible. Those only who have witnessed a similar scene can have any conception of its dramatic effect. The shouts of victory which attend the conquering pugilist must always be damped by feelings of compassion for the vanquished, or recorded as a lamentable memorial of the triumphs of brutality over the better feelings of the mind; independent of which the event is gradual, and therefore divested of that enthusiastic admiration which is the keystone of all transporting sensations; for when expectation and anxiety are wound up to the highest possible pitch, the quicker it is gratified the more powerful will be the effect. During the act of taking hold so intense was the interest that not a word could be distinguished; it almost seemed as if death-like silence was necessary to strengthen for one moment the foundation of the earth, lest the simultaneous burst of sounds of the next should occasion a percussion in the elements so violent as to endanger its solidity. To the conqueror this formidable yell seemed totally indifferent. He walked instantly to that part of the ring from which he advanced, while the discomfited Richie, after rising and looking for a moment after his victorious antagonist with no very enviable sensations, followed his example, being well aware that the best method of escaping any unpleasant observation was to put a jocular face upon the matter, and seem as indifferent as possible about the event.

The wrestling was now fast drawing to a conclusion. Walter Armstrong, though twelve months younger than his cousin, and

perfectly free from that vain confidence of himself which at times rendered Tommy arrogant and overbearing, possessed nearly the same prowess, had, by the collision of the renowned dons, been enabled to wrestle through the ring with equal credit and good humour, and was now the sole competitor remaining to dispute the prize with Clementson. Walter had since his residence in the neighbourhood been sometimes in company with Henry, and both had evinced an inclination to form a more intimate acquaintance; and therefore on hearing their names called together they advanced towards each other without any apparent intention of preparing for the final contest. "Now, what would I give," said Tommy Foster to his small circle of acquaintance, "to see my cousin Wat strutting about with yon gilded piece of leather round his shoulders?" "That is a thing," said his uncle, "I deem so unlikely, that I would much rather see him forbear the risk of a trial." "So would not I," said Richie, "for though his chance be small, a fall will hurt no man; and it is better to be thrown honourably, than to lie down like a coward, for when a man does his best what more can be expected from him?" A trial, however was not the intention of either party. Immediately on meeting each other, Walter signified his intention of not wrestling; while Henry insisted, that as he had wrestled more falls, and afforded better sport, he had a superior claim to the prize, which, as a matter of perfect indifference, he carelessly flung round his neck. A friendly shake of the hand terminated the dispute: and while Walter was pleased at the distinction, the resignation of the honour created little murmur among the friends of Henry, as the result of a trial would have been deemed too certain to have created any proportionate interest.

Thus terminated the first sports ever remembered upon Arlecdon Moor. The crowd in general began to disperse in all directions. The most eager of the elderly sportsmen sought the inside of the tents, to discuss at their leisure the events of the day; while the young began to draw down towards the village, where dancing had already commenced in a barn fitted up for the occasion, as well as in the upper apartments of the house of good Harry Jenkinson.

Immediately on quitting the ring, Henry Clementson had attached himself to a party of his particular friends, who, before their final separation for the day, were sauntering about, and occasionally purchasing gingerbread, &c. for such members of their respective families as they had left at home, a task as incumbent upon Henry as those who had chosen helpmates for life, as he resided with the only near relation he had living, a sister, whose husband, Edward Wilson, had accompanied him to the sports, and whose little ones, with whom he was a great favourite, had through long indulgences become accustomed to expect such trifling, though pleasing tokens of remembrance. Edward was, for the time and situation in which he was placed, a tolerable extensive farmer, in addition to the task of cultivating a small paternal estate on which he resided; and was related to the respectable proprietors of the extraparochial Esket estates, John Steel and Henry Westray, both of whom had young families; so that through his brother-in-law Henry Clementson was extensively and intimately acquainted in the neighbourhood of

Arlecdon. The important business relative to his children being completed, Edward Wilson prepared to return home. "Henry," said he, "why did you not take that strap from young Armstrong? It would have suited Mary Allison for her butter kits; and I heard you promise her the first you won." "Simply," said Henry, "because I did not win the belt in question, and therefore had no right to dispose of it." "Say, rather," replied young Joe Steel, of Esket, "your thoughts were otherwise engaged; for trust me, Ned, Harry was too intent upon gazing at and admiring Walter's pretty sister to think of such a thing as a belt. By my life, if Hal does not fairly blush; therefore, off Ned, and tell your wife that Harry fancies himself far gone in love with a wench whose father probably does not know how many of his male ancestors since the days of King Arthur have escaped the hands of the hangman, while I, in pure pity, will assist him in bestowing the ribbon, premising it will be upon the damsel from the east, for her eyes are too bright to suffer him to form an impartial judgment of the merits of her heels." Wilson laughed at Joe's sally, and wishing them good sport, and fair partakers of it, hastened home, and left the young men to bestow themselves as best suited their inclinations. On passing the outside of the tents, Henry observed the elder Foster and Robert Armstrong, in conversation with Westray and Kadgie Brown, a circumstance which did not tend to raise them in his estimation, as the desperate characters of these two men were well known throughout the west of Cumberland. On passing forward, Joe Steel discovered that the younger Foster and his cousins had joined themselves to a party with whom Walter and himself were mutually acquainted; they therefore hastened to overtake them without delay, and the whole party proceeded in high spirits towards the village of Arlecdon.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to select one single individual who, however voluble, polite, or even impudent, has not on some occasion felt too much mental embarrassment to reply, behave, or conduct himself with his accustomed equanimity, and self command. This was now precisely the case with Henry Clementson. The confusion he manifested at the simple raillery of his friend bore ample testimony that there were some shades of truth in it, which his taciturnity abundantly confirmed; for he was in general remarked for his self-possession and quickness of reply. His eyes had more than once during the sports met those of the fair stranger; and the more than usual observation the party which accompanied her had excited, particularly the vaunts of Richie Foster, which were with some additions soon disseminated throughout the vast assemblage, made it no difficult matter to ascertain who she was, a piece of intelligence indeed which he had acquired from Joe Steel himself. There is interwoven in the indivisibility of the human soul some indefinable ideas, which, however powerful when roused into action, slumber in quietness till awakened by recognizing in another those corresponding sympathies which, like a talisman, embodies the visionary charm, and instantly produces that irresistible impulse which often contributes to influence the most important transactions of our subsequent allotted pilgrimage; and it is no less strange than certain, that these ideal counterparts

are generally found to exist in uniformity of sentiment and similitude, and contrariety of habitual action. Hence the physiognomist and craniologist will generally discover some organical delineation, or similar expression of countenance, in man and wife; and hence authors in all ages have, in proportion to the courage and valour of their hero, represented the timidity and gentleness of their heroine. The distinguishing traits of disposition may be the same, but Camilla, or Penthesilea, would never have found a lover in Achilles, Hector, Æneas, Telemachus, or any other warrior of first-rate prowess; but must, like Artimesea, if beloved at all, have been content with having excited the unavailing love of some less distinguished suitor. Consistent with this acknowledged principle, no sooner did the eyes of Henry Clementson meet those of Mary Armstrong, than he felt a sensation to which he had hitherto been a stranger; and while gazing on such parts of her alabaster forehead as natural tresses of the richest auburn suffered to be visible, her bright blue eyes, her rich and pouting lips, which at times exposed to temporary view the whitest and most even set of teeth he had ever witnessed, a regularly beautiful and dimpled chin, and a complexion which far outvied the characteristics of the rival roses, he seemed to recognize the substance of that vision which his youthful day-dreams had sometimes represented to his enthusiastic fancy, but which he had hitherto deemed purely imaginary. The more he gazed the more he wished to gaze: and, particularly as he had been pointed out by Westray as the youth on whose prowess depended the success of her uncle's egotistical wager, Mary was at no loss to know who it was she had observed looking towards her with such intense interest. Henry had arrived on the ground only a few minutes previous to the commencement of the race, and had but just reached the scene of action when he was pointed out to Richie Foster as the most formidable opponent he was likely to encounter; and it was not till after the race, and the consequent squabble had partly subsided, that his attention had been attracted by an accidental observation of his friend Steel, that "so pretty a lass might have been in more suitable company." During the ensuing contests, he had once or twice chosen a situation from whence he could survey her at leisure; but this, instead of allaying, increased the inclination he felt to be further acquainted with her, that he might ascertain how far her mind and character assimilated with her outward appearance. As for the vaunts of Richie and his son, he set them at nought, regarding one as a sturdy stripling, and the other as past that time of life when bodily strength is not accompanied with so much quickness and vigour of action as to render it formidable to a youthful opponent of first-rate prowess, science, and action. In his trials, therefore, with the Fosters, he felt that confidence which the result perfectly warranted; and it was with himself a settled point that he would not contend with young Armstrong, except compelled to do so in order to come at them. The moment he had thrown Richie, he remarked with pleasure that Walter was the only stander excepting himself; and the little he had seen of him would have been a sufficient inducement to have conceded the prize of athletic prowess, independent

of the certainty that it was the most probable means of facilitating his acquaintance with his lovely sister. These circumstances had occasioned that confusion and unwonted taciturnity during his companion's sallies which, though Steel had in fact marked the behaviour of Henry, and even guessed at the cause, could have surprised no one more than himself; but equally anxious to gratify Henry, and afford a further opportunity of observation, no sooner had they joined the light-hearted cavalcade than he exclaimed, "Hey day, lads; better manners, I beseech you! Let us at least go like the lasses of Drigg, and lads of Beckermont! You, Walter, as the winner of the belt, ought to choose your damsel; and your cousin the next, as being a stranger. Choose, or suffer me to pair you. Fair maiden, addressing Mary, with your permission I will intrust you to the guidance of my cousin Hal, who is as able to protect as willing to take charge of you." "So far, Joe," replied Clementson, "you are an excellent master of ceremonies, but as winner of the gloves allow me to pair the remainder;" in doing which, he adroitly contrived, as the party were composed of an odd number, to leave out Joe, which afforded a general laugh; after which, Henry, throwing him the gloves, observed that they might keep him from burning his fingers. This did not disconcert Steel, who laughingly remarked, that he thanked Hal for his caution, and likewise for his preventative, but advised him to take care of his own heart, which he believed was in considerable danger of a flame which all the gloves in Cumberland could not smother. Thus, placed arm in arm, without having exchanged a single word, did Henry and Mary first enter the village of Arlecdon together.

In many of the modern novels we find it an established maxim, that at a ball or rout the room crowded to confusion is regarded as the envied criterion of distinguished excellence among the nobility, both as it augments the compliment paid to the liberal entertainer and enhances the pleasure of the visitors. If this be really the case, it is not surprising that the same relish for bustle should equally delight the motley group of visitants that at a wake, fair, or horse-race, flock in multitudes to where the pleasing sound of the fiddle emits the welcome note of invitation; and such have I often witnessed, in more modern times, inundate the premises of my worthy acquaintance, the present landlord at Arlecdon. And should the inquisitive reader wish to be informed what constitutes the pleasure of such an assemblage, I answer, the flowing bowl; the confused pressure of the crowd, which forms an excuse for the closer squeeze and the gentle kiss; the mingled variety of successive scenes and objects, which delight the eye and exhilarate the mind; and, what is still more essential to transitory enjoyment, the determination of such an assemblage to be pleased with everything which occurs. But to return to my story.

The crowded state of the dancing rooms at Arlecdon was such as to render futile any attempt of so numerous a party to keep together, and every couple was consequently left to shift for themselves. Thus circumstanced, the thousand trifling incidents which in such a situation incessantly occur tend more to place the parties on the footing of old acquaintance than years of cold and formal introduction.

Henry soon forgot his former embarrassment, and, perfect master of all the little assiduities so endearing to the gentler sex, he exerted his talents to please and amuse the fair object of his solicitude. He found himself, however, necessitated to proceed with the utmost caution. Mary, though the daughter of a border farmer, was entirely destitute of that rustic phraseology and homely train of manners and ideas often observable in many of a similar degree. Her excellent mother had been educated in a superior manner to the station she was destined to fill in society, and she had further profited by the instruction and example of an aged and independent matron, with whom she had occasionally resided in the double situation of attendant and companion. With such a character, Henry was equally at home as if he had been obliged to entertain the most rusticated damsel in the room; for being brought up in the vicinity of Whitehaven, he had received his education in that town, and was still in the habit of associating with his school-boy acquaintances, some of whom were rather of a superior class. This had given that polish to his manners and behaviour which is never found in young men entirely brought up in the country, even if restrained from mixing with the poorest class, and wholly confined to scholastic pursuits. Henry was alike renowned for rural gallantry and athletic exploits. His powers of observation were acute, and the continual opportunities afforded him for exercising his talent of discrimination in a sphere where the distinction between nature and art is more easily discerned than amongst those who are better educated, had rendered him so skilful a pathognomist, that in the expression of the face, he could interpret almost every movement of the mind. No wonder, then, if Mary, young, artless, and unengaged, was delighted with the scene, the attentions she received, and the youth who bestowed them; while Henry, charmed as well with the mind as with the person of his partner, was jealous even of the little interruption occasioned by an attempt to restore something like order in the barn, till the ribbon was contended for.

The right of bestowing the ribbon was, from time immemorial, vested in the winner of the belt, a distinction of which Henry had never been solicitous, and which he had often delegated to the fiddler or the landlady; and when consulted on this occasion, he insisted on having nothing to do with it, as Walter Armstrong was the undisputed proprietor of the belt. Walter, however, was not at all anxious of the honour; but observed, he was willing to decide according to the best of his judgment, provided Henry, who had at least an equal right, would assist him with his advice. Accordingly, Walter, with the maiden allotted to him on the common, having seated himself beside Henry and his sister, the fair and youthful competitors for the last and gentlest triumph of the day soon made their appearance. It was customary, on everything being arranged for the commencement of this graceful sport, for any candidate to come forward at her own option, and choose the dance in which she excelled. Those who contended were generally girls about thirteen or fourteen years of age, at which period the muscles have attained the necessary degree of strength, without losing any of their elasticity; and

the dance chosen, some species of hornpipe, combining quick and rapid movements of the jig, with the slower and more stately dancing incidental to the reel. The three candidates on this occasion were all excellent dancers; and as the friends of each loudly applauded their respective exertions, it was evident that the prize, an elegant sky blue ribbon, was confidently expected by all of them. This placed the umpires, neither of whom wished to wound the feelings of either the dancers or their friends, in rather a disagreeable dilemma. They consulted each other, advised with their partners, and agreed upon nothing, but that it was impossible for them conscientiously to award the palm of victory. At this critical moment, Joe Steel made his appearance, and relieved the embarrassed judges, by observing that they had better withdraw for the purpose of making up their minds, before they delivered their decision. This was joyfully consented to, and the knotty point being referred to the wily Joe, he immediately observed that "Dame Jenkinson had plenty of ribbons, and that if none were so well pleased as if they had been the individual victor, yet three grumbling curs were not so dangerous, as two biters." This plan was unanimously adopted, three ribbons exactly similar were provided, which Dame Jenkinson was desired to distribute; and to explain, that the candidates had acquitted themselves so well that the umpires could not decide which was best, but had cordially agreed, that all were far too good to lose, and therefore had assigned a full prize to each, a decision which was received with loud tokens of approbation by all, for if the distinction was less conspicuous than if one favour only had been bestowed, the friends of all were mutually pleased at being spared the possible mortification of witnessing their respective favourites being subjected to temporary comparative disgrace.

Instead of returning immediately to the dancing room, which was now crowded almost to a degree of suffocation, a ramble on the road which leads towards the church was mutually agreed to. The evening was perfectly mild and tranquil. The moon, though about to enter into her last quarter, was clear and ample enough to illumine the summits of Weddiker and Whillymoor to the left, but had not risen sufficiently high to dispel the comparative obscurity occasioned by the height of the Leys to the right, a circumstance which tended to heighten the contrast, and added to the beauty of the scene. This, though perhaps not the only inducement, might serve as a plea for the two umpires to persuade their fair companions to extend their walk considerably beyond the limits generally chosen by those numerous parties of stragglers which, at such a time, perambulate the roads, to enjoy the opportunities such a ramble affords for promoting that more mischievous relative of mirth—fun; and that variety of remark which, before the establishment of the *Cumberland Pacquet* (the oldest provincial newspaper within a very extensive circuit) was indispensable for keeping in exercise the gossiping talents of the neighbourhood. On passing the road leading to Brownrigg, our ramblers observed a female figure, whose singular appearance attracted their particular observation. What had once been a coarse linsey-woolsey gown, of different colours, was discernable, even

in the shaded moonlight, to be hanging in tatters; and to what article of dress it had belonged could only be ascertained by its closer compression upon the loins of the wearer, so as still to retain the resemblance of a waist, and the quantum of sleeve which reached just round the elbow, and displayed her arms and hands, the flesh of which, if ever there had been any, had long since deserted them. Her lower garments, as far as could be distinguished, corresponded with the poverty of the exterior, which further consisted of a long piece of linsey, which served for a neckcloth, and a hat, small and shallow in the crown, but which was amply compensated by its unusual projection before and behind; and, though tightened below her chin with a handkerchief, did not altogether conceal her face, the general structure of which appeared long and thin, and was partly covered with a profusion of white and grey hairs which behind hung loose and unbraided, quite over her shoulders. At such a time and place, the strange and unexpected appearance of so remarkable a figure could not fail to awaken a curiosity which was augmented by the steady and fixed regard with which she surveyed and continued looking after them as they passed on towards the church. To Walter and his sister she was wholly unknown; but as soon as the increasing distance precluded the possibility of being overheard Fanny Westray, he maiden whom Joe Steel had confided to Walter's protection, observed, that "she wondered what old Eleanor Anderson wanted there at such a time of night;" to which Henry replied, "that she was probably in expectation of pocketing some of the King's coin; though a station nearer the village would, on such an occasion, have been more lucrative, unless she had an especial appointment with some customer who wanted no listener but himself to the changes of his future life." "The poor creature is, then, a fortune-teller," said Mary. "To judge from the eagerness with which she surveyed us, she either expected a fee or imagined she recognized some former customers. Pray, did you ever consult her?" "Indeed, I never did," replied Henry, "small faith have I in such predictions; yet, I confess, should I do so, the haughty severity with which she is said to treat even those whose munificent offerings might well be supposed to influence her good wishes; her refusal to disclose the fate of others; and the strange stories told of the truth of her predictions, might, should her auguries prove unpropitious, possibly tempt me to say something which might affront a poor old woman, who is, without doubt, often flighty, and who, my sister tells me, was an intimate acquaintance of my grandmother's, on which account I have always avoided giving her the least shadow of offence. Besides, I never till this day felt extremely anxious to pry into futurity; and gladly would I listen to a favourable doom, pronounced through the medium of fairer lips, by one who possesses much more power over my future destiny than ever did Ellen Anderson. What think you, Walter?" "I never thought much upon such objects," replied Walter, "but so little do I regard the prophecies of all the old women in the county, crazy, or otherwise, that should the old sybil favour us with another such inspection, I will, come weal, come woe, give her the option of trying her powers of divination." "Why, really, Walter, if the old woman

would condescend to be complaisant, she might have customers galore; but at all events, should she be in the mood, and deal favourably with you, I care not if I likewise challenge a cast of her office."

By this time they had reached the extremity of the inclosed town-field, where, having viewed for some time the beautiful scenery to the north and east, they began to retrace their steps towards Arlecdon. On approaching the small gate which opens into the church-yard, they observed it was now unhasped; and the moon, which Henry had just been observing, had approached the hour of her change. Having gained the summit of the hill to the south-east, they were enabled to discover the shadowy figure of old Eleanor Anderson, kneeling on the green turf, and earnestly gazing on the changing luminary. Either regardless or ignorant that there were any mortal witnesses to her actions, the old woman, in a clear, pathetic, and harmonious voice, repeated the following stanzas:—

All hail, chaste empress of the night,
Whose rays yon distant hills adorn,
Here lone I watch thy silver light,
And life's protracted sorrows mourn!
For here all earthly troubles cease,
And weary mortals rest in peace.

Queen of the vast, tempestuous main!
Whose changes rule the waves and wind,
Nor bounded by that power maintain,
Their influence o'er the human mind;
When like thy course through angry skies
The visions of the future rise.

Here shroudless, by thy light remov'd,
In sacred earth to find repose;
Low lies the form of him I lov'd,
Unconscious now of human woes:
While years of mingled joy and woe
All wildly in my memory glow.

'Twas in this changing, mystic hour
That first my plighted faith I gave;
Nor dreamt thy waning spells of power
Portended an untimely grave.
And yet those ties, though broke by thee,
Are sacred still to love and me.

Still in this hour will Ellen view
Thy splendid orb this turf illumine;
And bathe her temples in the dew
That rises pure from Richard's tomb!
Till, severed from all earthly ties,
I seek his spirit through the skies.

Arlecdon Church is nearly half a mile distant from the village, or any other place of residence, and is consequently well calculated to inspire that reverential awe which all who are worthy of the name of man feel when approaching so unequivocal a proof of the uncertainty of human life as a church-yard presents, in so lonely a situation, at the solemn hour of midnight. It is at such a time that the best feelings of our nature are awake; and as we view the resting place of so

many, undisturbed by the bustle of the world, we contemplate the frailty of our present existence, and as its importance, except as it affects our eternal happiness, dwindles into nothing before the certainty of its termination, and the assurance that we shall be forgotten upon earth, we feel, in its fullest and most proper extent, the necessity of fixing our affections upon subjects that the grave affects, only as a barrier which must be passed by all, and which, as they are equally certain are beyond all human calculation, more permanent and lasting. It is true that there are some who, either for want of sense or proper reflection, will, through mere bravado when in company, affect to despise, or turn to ridicule, those feelings of the soul which are in themselves an indubitable proof that there is a God, a Redeemer, and an awful eternity; but such were not the youthful party that had so unexpectedly witnessed the actions and overheard the singular orisons of Eleanor Anderson, which clearly indicated that some dreadful calamity in early life had affected her understanding. The mingled sensations of awe, pity, and surprise kept them silent as the emblems of mortality around them; and so totally absorbed was every other faculty in listening to her strange soliloquy, and watching her proceedings, that not one of them attempted either to speak or move, till the old woman, rising from the ground, slowly advanced up the path which led directly to the gate where they were standing, when, by a simultaneous movement, they all at once drew back to allow her full liberty to pass. This did not, however, appear to be her intention, for having closed the gate without any apparent emotion, she turned round without speaking, and placing her hands upon her sides, continued steadfastly to gaze upon the countenances of those she probably considered as intruders. The moon, which beamed full in the faces of the youthful wanderers, gave Eleanor an incalculable advantage over them; for her face, shaded from the light, and further obscured by the projection of her hat, was visible only by the reflection of her large dark eyes, which glittered with more than mortal lustre. Both the young women instinctively shuddered beneath the earnest gaze of the almost supernatural being before them, and clung closer to the arms of their protectors; while Henry and Walter, though somewhat abashed, endured her keen glances without shrinking. The death-like silence observed by both parties, which continued for some time, and which added to the solemnity of the scene, was first broke by Henry Clementson. "Pray, good Dame, what is your reason for planting yourself there, and looking so earnestly at us?" "It is to discover whether your coming here was purposely or accidental," was the reply. "If that be your wish," answered Henry, "you take a strange, and let me tell you, a very unlikely method for procuring its gratification. It is, however, of too little consequence to be made a secret of. We are young, were at the sports, and, being almost suffocated in the barn, took a walk to refresh ourselves. On our return we observed this gate open, and discovered you in the church-yard; and we have waited your return, it may be, to render you assistance, if needful. You are old and feeble, far from home, and in this solitary place at midnight. Tell me, then,

whether your appearance here, or ours, is the most natural?" "Henry Clementson," said the old woman in a feeling and sorrowing tone of voice, "thine are the words of truth, and thine is the strong and ready hand, and the feeling heart which hath afforded me protection from the ignorant and brutish rabble; and with thee I will not dissemble. For fifty years of sorrow have I, in sickness and in health, by night and by day, in this place awaited that hour of change which is just added to the time that has gone for ever. My pilgrimage is now completed; and long ere that annual change shall return will all that is mortal of this fading form be like the millions that have preceded me to the grave. But much it grieves me to see the offspring of her who was long dearest to me upon earth, the once fair and blooming Ellen Crosby, in such company at this unlucky and mysterious hour." "Nay, good mother," replied Henry, "for the kindness your speech is meant to convey I thank you; but you overshoot the mark. What can my company possibly be to you? If you have been unfortunate, and date your sorrows from this hour, it is nothing to the present purpose. All changes must have a beginning, and the hour which was unpropitious to you may be more favourable to another. But from what part of this company can you augur evil to me?" "You have mistaken my meaning, Henry. I meant no reflection upon your company in the manner in which you have understood me. They may be as good, nay, be better than yourself, and yet not the less dangerous. Whatever they are, they are with you at this hour of change, a time which is fraught with evil to those whom the fates may subject to its influence; and when I who have drank so deeply of its bitter potion can no longer be swayed by it, on whom should the load of sorrow fall but upon those who have been the only living witnesses to its baleful effects? And again I say it grieves me you should have incurred the danger." "If," said Walter, "the danger be such as cannot be avoided, what need we trouble ourselves about it? Yet if this old dame can, as is said of her, and as she herself seems to advance, peep into futurity, I freely, as far as regards myself, challenge her to the disclosure; for which due recompense shall be made, provided it is worth the hearing." "Nay, young man," replied she, "keep thy money, for to me it were now useless: yet this much will I tell thee, and thou mayest recall my words to remembrance, when thou alone wilt be able to judge of their truth. Thou wilt be the longest survivor of this present company by very many years; nor wilt thou ever be the husband of that maiden who now stands by thy side." "Now, dame Eleanor thou art speaking further than thou knowest, for"—"Peace," said she, interrupting him, "for so it is decreed. Another is destined for thee, who will see thee laid as low as thou shalt soon see others. I waste no more words with thee." "Truly, Walter," observed Henry, "you have no great reason to complain. Long life, and an helpmate whose loss you will have no occasion to mourn, are no unpleasant tidings. Can you not, good dame, as Walter and Fanny are not destined to come together, prognosticate more favourable on that score relative to his fair sister and her present companion?" "Henry Clementson," said the old woman,

with great solemnity, and drawing close up to them, "make no jest of my predictions, nor attempt to disguise the interest you feel in the question you have asked. Many are the opportunities you have had of asking me to unfold your destiny; yet never before did you express a wish of hearing. Fair, indeed, is she whom you have thus chosen: and if my eyes deceive me not, as good as fair. Therefore, mark the result of my observations. You have both the same sign of nativity, and so far all is well. But, (added she, after keenly scrutinizing the face of each) you have met together under an ominous and adverse planet; and though it cannot separate you long, its influence may be fatal to you both. There are ways to circumvent its malignancy. But no! my brain burns as it is wont when daring to remove the veil which shadows futurity: the mists dispel, and I see, O God! yet why should I anticipate? Away, I will tell you no more. Nay, interrupt me not; farewell." And before Henry could recover from his astonishment, old Eleanor, with a swiftness of foot almost surpassing credibility, was too far gone for him to think of detaining her without the certainty of attracting the observation of other parties of stragglers, who would not have neglected such an opportunity of exercising their talents of remark.

Walter was the first of the petrified party that recovered the use of his tongue. "So," said he, "we must have our fortunes speered, and, forsooth, we have been accommodated with a vengeance! The old sybil is not, however, far read in the mysteries of her profession; all plain sailing, a little about planets and signs, &c., but nothing about horoscopes, and the more abstruse parts of the science. What is the difference, I should like to know, between a fortune-teller and a witch? The old woman seems to have been unfortunate, and nothing but misfortunes run in her head. Let me see, *inprimis*, I was to survive you all; well, certainly some of us must be the longest liver, and as I believe I am the youngest, should that prove to be the case, it will be no very convincing proof of her skill. We will therefore set that down as something indifferent. But I was not to marry you, Fanny! That was bad, very bad, and I hope is a lie! Therefore, her last prediction is not worth attending to. Now then, for you: *apropos*, you were both born under the same sign. Let us see how that tallies." "I was twenty-four on the eighteenth of April last," said Henry. "My sister's birth-day, as I am a sinner!" exclaimed Walter, rather startled at this coincidence; "for I remember well that she was twenty-one on that very day. Your age was no doubt well known to her, but how she came to be so well acquainted with Mary's is not so easy to determine; though it might be possible enough. Well, but no matter, that was all very good. Then you had met under the same planet to which she imputes her own misfortunes; and reason good it should be no favourite with her. That is all very natural. A burnt child, it is said, dreads the fire. Then came the climax, which I confess I would have preferred in the comic, rather than the tragic style. But what reason could be expected from a silly old creature, who has gone quite crazy with ransacking the elements to find out the time of her own dissolution." In this noisy strain did Walter run on till they arrived at the

village, partly because he had no faith in the prophecies of Eleanor Anderson, and partly to dispel the evident effects of her prediction upon Mary and Fanny, and spite of one or two feeble endeavours to disguise it, even upon Henry himself, whom Walter now regarded with unqualified admiration. His courage and unrivalled prowess, joined to his unassuming manner in resigning the belt, were all his youthful and ardent disposition, and to rivet his warmest friendship and esteem.

The scene which awaited their return to the ball-room was one of a very different description from the last. The barn was not so much crowded as when they left it, but it was equally as noisy and disturbed. Robin Armstrong, Richie Foster, Brown, and Westray, had found their way down to the village, and Tommy Foster, who was too found of mountain dew to be quite sober, had, in consequence, lost his sweetheart, and again joined his former companions in a very captious humour. In fact the whole party were more than half-seas-over, and peace was very difficult to preserve amongst them. Robin Armstrong, though a bold and daring character, was of rather a taciturn disposition, and one of the few who possess the singular property of preserving a due command of temper, amidst the wildest uproar of dissipation; and had even been known to pocket affronts when in liquor, which he was anxious to resent when quite sober. Long before his presence was observed by any of the party, Henry could discover that Robin Armstrong had full exercise to preserve quietness between his relations, and Brown and Westray, and that he himself was the cause of quarrel. "There is surely no occasion for dispute," said Armstrong, "those who lost, are as willing to pay as the winners are to receive; and you say, Westray, -that the young fellow has more than once affronted both Brown and you, and as to my brother and nephew, they have no cause of quarrel with him. To be sure, I do think myself that he is a better man than either of them at this time; but Tommy may long be a match for him, therefore drop the subject altogether." "To be sure," said Tommy, sulkily, "he won the gloves, and threw me fairly, and therefore I will pay my bets honourably. But in spite of all Kadgie's bragging, I dare fight either of them any time they like." "I bragged none," said Brown, "but I have no occasion to be continually bullied by any of you; and I say again, Clementson is a better, aye, I say, better man than any the border can produce; and as to Tom's fighting him it is mere nonsense. He would lick him as easy as he threw him, and that was as easy as if he had been a baby." "Thou'rt a liar, Kadgie!" cried Richie. "No man can make such a baby of either my son or his father; and that I will let thee know presently." "That thou shall not!" exclaimed Westray; "you have bantered us all night, and Brown is right." At the very moment when Robin's influence would no longer have availed, he fortunately espied his son and his companions—"Peace," cried he, "ye hot-headed asses! See, here is Walker, and Henry Clementson himself."

These words had a kind of electrical effect upon the four wranglesome companions of Robin Armstrong; and the violent passions with which they had been previously agitated subsided immediately into a

settled calm. The words of strife, and the arms raised for combat, were instantly exchanged for one general stare of surprise at the person who had been the innocent, though immediate cause of their contention; and all, from different motives, feeling somewhat abashed at his unexpected pretence, after earnestly surveying him for a moment, seemed to drop every intention of strife, and slunk silently to the seats they had previously occupied; while the young men, who had been the means of preventing actual hostilities, accompanied by their fair companions, advanced towards the now quiet and peaceful party.

"It is well lads ye are come," cried Robin Armstrong on seeing them approach, "otherwise we should have had pretty doings, I believe. Therefore, come, sit down, and help me to keep peace among these quarrelsome blades who will needs cut one another's throats, which would be a most sinking loss, either to our young King's revenue, or to the distillers of the water of life. Therefore, I pray ye, as ye are honest men, and good subjects, assist me either to keep these sparks quiet, or find them something worth while to quarrel about. Here, Harry, bring us another bowl of punch; and hang him who will not sooner drink than quarrel without a reason." The transitions of the last few minutes had contributed to dissipate the effects of the liquor they had so plentifully swallowed, and the speech of Robin Armstrong, purposely calculated to awaken them to a just sense of the folly of quarrelling amongst themselves, had its due effect upon the whole party; and observing Walter and Henry preparing to join them, each determined to take no further notice at present, either of the scuffle, or the occasion of it.

The moment Henry Clementson was seated, Tommy Foster rose, snatched the bowl from the hands of the landlord, and advanced with it towards him. "If I lose a wager," cried he, "I will pay it honourably! Here is the bowl you won of me, and here is the hand of a true Britoner! and damn, if I retain any malice or illwill towards you, more than to the child that is unborn, though you hindered me of both the belt and gloves; aye, and, moreover, enabled these knaves to laugh at me into the bargain, which was equally as provoking as throwing me." Henry instantly seized the proffered hand, and shaking it heartily replied that for his own part their meeting in the ring had only made him more desirous of his acquaintance, as every man had a right, and as far as regarded him, was welcome to do his best. His maxim was, never to think himself thrown till he found he was undermost on the ground: and he had surely no right to think anything but well of those who entertained the same opinion as himself. Then, grasping the bowl, he drank to the good health of all present, and, turning to Richie, who had been surveying him with a minuteness something similar to the look of a mastiff when undetermined whether to bite or lick the hand about to caress it, he remarked, "that if he had been a few years younger, he would have been the most dangerous customer he had ever met with, as so strong an arm had never crossed his back before." Nothing could have been more agreeable to the frank and warm heart of Richie than such an observation from a man of Henry's prowess. He started up, and cried with the voice of a Stentor, "Then give me a shake of thy

daddle, for thou art a true-hearted chap, I warrant thee! Aye, thou sayest true, I have in my time made many a good man know the time o' day to his sorrow! But thou galloped over me as if I had been a jennyspinner. I thought yance to-day, I could have wisted thee about like a cat without claws; but hark thee, lad, I think the trial was as well let alone. So give me thy hand, and I promise thee it will be thy own fault if ever we quarrel again." "Then," replied Robin, "I will pledge that you continue friends a long time; for I know that Henry is none of your waspish crazy pates that cannot take a glass without being foolish. So enough said, we are all friends now, and let us be merry. Come, Brown, push round the bowl and give us something in point." "Point, or not point," said Brown, "if I sing this night, excepting a stave of my own, may this be my poison! Point quotha! What is this? Gin, as I am the son of a woman! Then, judge ye, my lads, if I sing not to the point.

Your gentry may boast of their slip-slopping wine,
And in extacies term it a liquor divine,
But if such was the drink of the heathens of old,
It made Bacchus a sot, and dame Juno a scold.
Be mine the pure beverage, which, bouncing apart,
Each drop that you swallow goes plump to the heart!
O! for tuning all discords the regions within,
There's nothing so famous as true Hollands gin!

Then there's brandy, French brandy! come push round
the bowl,
It lightens the mind, and enlivens the soul.
And good reason it should, for it comes from a coast
Where the air is more pure than old England can boast.
Then let us be merry, and brook no delay,
Till darkness gives place to the rosy-faced day;
For no toper on earth can the praises advance,
Or detract from the worth of the brandy of France.

"Now, boys, call ye not that in point?" "Look ye, lads," said Richie, "it may be all well enough in the way of a man's calling; but I say, curse the French, and their liquor, and climate altogether; for they neither eat, drink, nor fight like men. For when Brown and I went over one time, in that La, La, Galle, damn their lingo into the bargain, say I, I happened to give one of them a rattle over his chops for his jabber, which laid him sprawling like the hinder legs which they cut off the poor innocent frogs to make scouse of, and the bloody cut-throats drew as many knives as would have carved me into crown pieces, had I not seized the fire irons, and driven the cowardly rascals out of the room." And what was Brown doing all this time, Richie?" said Westray. "Brown, Oh! Brown was busy colloquing with the magistrates of the place about his own affairs." "Come, come, Richie, stop your gallop about that. You know had it not been for me you would have been a sojourner in the hulks to this day for your pranks that trip. It was all work to get him clear, I'll assure ye." "Why," said Richie, "to give the thy due, thou had'st some influence there, to be sure. I remember they would have made thee hangman-general; but the Popish ordinary, who was himself a true Judas, I'll warrant him, took it into his head that while Brown's right eye was examining the halter, his

left had a kind of leer towards him, which he did not half like; and as these fellows have all to say there, poor Kadgie lost the office." The whole company laughed heartily at Richie's invention; but Robin, observing Brown's countenance began to forebode a storm, said "Come come, Richie, no more of your bitter jokes. As you did not like Brown's song, try if you can give us a better." "Me sing! Can the Devil whistle? But Tommy, ye can give old Andrew Dobson's lilt to the same tune. Ye kenned old Andrew Dobson, some of ye! he dearly loved the smack of the peet reek, and a hearty old codger he was, but he overdosed himself at last, and a wae fu' tale I could tell of his latter end. But hang care, drink about, and listen till honest Andrew's lilt." Tommy, who had no mean pipe of his own, and hated ceremony as much as his father, lost no time in acceding to his wishes.

Come all ye good fellows who wiah to unite,
Stand true to each other, and do what is right,
Let us haste to the Highlands, the country for me!
And bring home the liquor that sparkles so free:
For to sharpen the wit, and ennoble the blood,
There's nothing on earth half so cheap, or so good;—
For though small be the pittance the kern can afford,
Let him quaff a few mutchkins,—he's high as a lord!

Then hark to the saddle; those hills let us seek
Where the natives subsist by the smack of their reek;
Where the dew of the vallies, and breeze of the hills,
Resemble the liquid that flows from their stills;
For when clear as the first are the bubbles that float
No balsam so healthy ere ran down a throat.
And no fat gouty toper the blessing ere knew.
Of that liquor so wholesome, the pure mountain dew.

After the noise with which this boisterous proceeding was accompanied had partly subsided, Richie Foster, turning to good Harry Jenkinson, asked him "If he did not prefer the pure mountain dew to either gin or brandy?" "Truly," said Harry, "I think there is little difference. Our excise folks make no distinction between them; and as for my own drinking, home-brewed for me! No, no, none of your strong fiery potions for me, which are like to blister the mouth, and scald the very guts in a man's belly. The foaming tankard and a hearty drink for my money; and no sipping and slavering like a woman drinking tea, or tasting aniseed water. And for singing, I will bring you Will Sinclair of Croasdale, and he shall sing ye a fine ballad as long as my arm, made by old Robin Jenkinson, my neighbour and kinsman, and every bit of it in praise of home-brewed, I warrant ye!" and suiting the action to the word, good Harry departed in quest of the personage he had recommended.

A scene like this, assisted by the effluvia of tobacco, could not possess many attractions for the young females who formed a part of the company; and Mary had more than once pressed her father to return home. Of this, however, she entertained but faint hopes. She knew her uncle and the nature of his connexions too well to expect that he would be in any hurry; and her father, even if so inclined, could not leave him with propriety. The anxiety she felt on her

mother's account prompted her to make another attempt to induce them to depart; but it was as futile as the former. Richie pressed her to stop and hear Will Sinclair's ballad; and Robin's answer was precisely the same, "Aye, lassie, just now!" as it had been some time before, and which she was almost certain would not vary for an hour to come. Walter and Fanny were ready to depart, and the youth who sprung to her side to accompany them was perhaps the most impatient of the three. Mary felt and was fully conscious of the importance of that moment, and the influence it might have on her future destiny. Walter would, no doubt, escort Fanny home, and it was equally certain that Henry would not leave her; and however much she felt inclined to be pleased with his attentions, the predictions of the old woman, which clearly foreboded evil, still rung in her ears. It was likewise very probable that she would in future be looked upon as a sweetheart of Henry Clementson's, as not a single day would elapse before even her mother would be acquainted with their being together, and that he accompanied her home. All these things, though perhaps pleasing in the whole, are, for the first time, not devoid of embarrassing and even painful sensations to a young and bashful maiden. There was however, no alternative. The business he had yet to conclude made Robin Armstrong glad of any plausible pretence for their departure; and perceiving them ready, he observed, "I am sure, Mary, you have company sufficient to take care of you, if"—glancing at his daughter, and a father's fears for a moment crossing his mind,—"you can take care of yourself." It was now useless to wait, and the youthful party after enduring the wit of their temporary companions, which however Walter and Henry endeavoured to retort with interest, left the barn amongst the whispers and remarks of the remaining part of the company.

"Come, lads," said Westray, "push round the bowl; we are now alone, one drink more, and then to business. The time is fast approaching, and we must determine upon something. By the bye, our falling in with Clementson is somewhat unlucky, for we shall be completely in his power; he will either fall in with us at your house, or meet us on his return." "If I had thought of that," said Tommy, "I would have prevented his going. What if I go after them, and try to prevent his going home with Mary?" "That will not do," rejoined Westray, "I would as soon think of thrusting my head into a lion's den as trying that experiment. Clementson is quiet enough and let him alone, but interfere with him, and you never saw such a high-flown devil in your life. Nay, nay, Tom! I wish you well, but drop all thoughts of crossing him." "I think," said Richie, "he is as thou sayest Westray, a very devil when provoked; but did either of you see him fairly tried?" "Tried," said Brown, "you know Jock Harrison, the Burslem tinker?" "Aye," said Richie, "and as good a man he is as ever peeled in a ring." "Well! Jock was in his waggeries one Sunday afternoon on the Skittle Hill, at Hensingham and threw a youngster's hat, who was bowling, beside his grey-faced dog Trusty, bidding him take care of it, and amused himself with the efforts made to take it from him, when up comes this same spark, and knowing the urchin who owned the hat, seized on a

sapling, and poor Trusty, in endeavouring to defend the charge intrusted to him, was laid sprawling, and had his brains beat out in an instant. You know that Jock prized the dog as he did his own life, and he was not slow in preparing to take revenge, and I did expect would have given Clementson a thrashing, for they had a fair trial for it. But it would not do. Jock was knocked down at every turn; and though he fought till he was nearly lifeless, he was licked like a child, while Clementson had scarcely a scratch; and when the fight was over, he threw the carcass of Trusty beside his master, and bade us bury the two brutes together." "Faith," said Richie, "I think I had nearly caught a Tartar; but ye see we are friendly enough now. But will the young fellow peach think you?" "As for your friendship, Richie," said Westray, "I can see into that as far as another; but I will say no more on that subject: and as to peaching, there is no fear of that, for though he has never been concerned himself, he would neither inform nor assist a seizure for all the brandy in Cumberland. But look ye! here comes our landlord and Willy Sinclair, both in right good order. We must first hearken to the praises of home-brewed, and then be off in a jiffy."

While these worthies were thus amusing themselves, Henry and Walter, arm in arm with their fair companions, had passed the tents upon the common, which were now nearly deserted, except by those who dozed upon the benches or lay stretched out at full length along or beneath them. They were not long in crossing the remainder of the common, passing through Winter Gill, and reaching Eskat, which, as the residence of Fanny Westray, was the place where they must separate, a circumstance productive of great anxiety to every individual of the party. Their conversation along the road had been general, and the events of the day had furnished such ample materials for remark, that the journey had passed over almost imperceptibly; but now was the time to determine what progress the lovers had really made in the affections of their respective partners. Fanny felt no objection to Walter's company; and Walter, in addition to the preference he felt for Fanny's society, was aware that he would be laughed at if it was known that he parted from her without entering the house, a favour for which he was therefore determined to be solicitous, except urged by Mary to accompany her home, which would probably subject him both to Henry's illwill and the consequences of his remaining with Fanny, if disappointed by his sister, who had been all the evening under his more particular escort. Henry felt an interest in the event to which he had hitherto been a stranger, while Mary scarcely knew what to think, or how she ought to act with propriety; and therefore determined to be guided by Walter's conduct on the occasion, whom she knew was more jealous of her character than his own, and who, from his previous acquaintance with her lover, would assuredly not throw her into his company if he judged it improper.

There is a kind of instinctive propriety on some occasions, as incidental to all classes in society as the sack is common to nearly all the nations in Europe; and it was this which caused Walter and Henry to suffer their partners to withdraw their arms from them

at the same moment, as mutually conscious that they might wish to have some little conversation together before they separated, unknown to any other person. The young women accordingly withdrew close to the door, while their admirers, aware that there was no danger of losing them in such a situation, remained watching their motions at some distance. "Walter," said Henry, hesitatingly, "do you intend to stop here any time with Fanny?" "Yes," replied Walter, frankly, "if Mary's partner does not think her either too old or too ugly to be at the trouble of seeing her safe home." "I like your frankness, Walter: but do you really think your sister will accept of my company?" "Do I think! how in the name of Cupid should I know my sister's thoughts? Why, Henry, that old sybil has surely turned your brain, or you would not ask me so foolish a question. If I stop here, it is not likely that Mary will prefer a solitary ramble at this hour; and I fancy the lasses are not in the habit of running away from you." "Seriously, Walter, I know not what to think. I wish old Ellen Anderson had been one hundred miles from our path, for I confess her predictions hang like a millstone upon me. And for your sister, think not I will ever resign her unless she fairly discards me, for all the old women in the universe." "Well, enough said; there is no proof like trial. But see, if I mistake not, the door opened, and therefore there is no time to lose. I will not, however, stop long here at this time, and will probably see you again before daylight. If not, will you go to church, and take pot-luck with us to-morrow?" "I cannot promise that; but if the day be fine, expect me in the afternoon, when we can talk farther at our leisure." And so saying, the young men instantly drew up to the door.

Scarcely had the young women reached the porch, an appendage which was generally attached to the entrance of all farm-buildings in olden times, ere they could plainly distinguish suppressed voices within; and on Fanny's trying the door for admittance, it instantly yielded to the first pressure. This created no surprise, as the reason was sufficiently obvious. One of her sisters and the maid-servant had been at the races, and had preceded them home, not unaccompanied, and were diverting themselves in the intermediate time by introducing in their remarks upon the events of the day such appropriate inuendoes relative to their present situation as seldom fail to please those for whose ears they are intended. These conversations are often extremely lively and amusing, as they are generally considered on all sides as a game, or trial of wit, a quality allowed by all to be most satisfactorily distributed, as very few are, in reality, willing to admit that their own quantum is anything deficient; and sly comparative allusions in which every individual is more or less concerned are incessantly bandied about, and couched under observations which, as all participate in the joke, seem equally to affect the whole company. Yes, though many of my readers will censure as imprudent and immodest the delights which spring from such unrestricted and private intercourse between the sexes as characterizes our Oumbrian manner of rural courtship, yet they know neither half its pleasures nor the lively innocency with which it is generally accom-

panied. It is often, with the rustic swain, the mainspring of his actions and the *summum bonum* of his happiness, divested of which he would become a mere formal clodpole, without either life or spirit, a miserable burthen to himself, useless to his country, and a nuisance to society, instead of being what he is, not only the hardy and vigorous supporter of that structure of which he forms a part, but one of those invaluable contributors which Goldsmith very justly observes:—

“When once destroy’d can never be supplied.”

It has been erroneously maintained, or rather supposed, by some that this manner of proceeding affords such favourable opportunities for criminal connexions that seduction follows as a matter of course. This is in itself a sufficient proof that those who suppose so are deducing inferences from a principle with which they are totally unacquainted. Illegitimacy is not more frequent in the country than in towns, or in those places where such opportunities do not exist, and is still less common in those parts of Scotland where such seeming liberties are allowed as would in Cumberland be deemed immodest. In point of fact, without alleging that night is the only time at their own disposal for meetings which all must allow to be indispensable, custom appears to level all distinction in such cases. Those lovers who are unaccustomed to a midnight *tete-a-tete*, might, if placed in such a situation, feel rather embarrassed, and consider it in some degree tolerating liberties which under other circumstances they would not have dreamt of, and

“A dear lov’d lad, convenient snug,
A treacherous inclination,”

might have some influence on their future movements; but when such opportunities are sanctioned by custom, and expected as matters of course, they convey no intimation of immodest freedom, and remove no barrier to natural modesty. The bounds consistent with innocence are as clearly defined and as well understood as at any similar meeting under different circumstances; and until a rural population as active, intelligent, and independent, and a county where fewer atrocities connected with any intercourse between the sexes can be pointed out, it will be time enough to indulge in ideal speculations tending to asperse the customs of our own neighbourhood in this respect.

This unexpected addition to the number of inmates did not disturb the peace and tranquillity which reigned in the dwelling of Henry Westray, of Eskat. A mutual endeavour to identify each other, during which some ludicrous mistakes frequently occur, is generally the prevailing inducement for the first few minutes; and then each selecting their previous associate, they retire to such places as seem to preclude all fear of unwelcome interruption. Accordingly before Mary was well aware of their absence, Walter and Fanny were, stranger as she was to the house, far beyond the probability of her finding them again; and anxious as she really felt to reach home, no alternative remained but departing with Henry. The distance between Salter and Eskat is not great, but it yet is, though less so than

at that period, a gloomy and solitary road, either by the principal high way or the nearer footpath which was for that reason chosen by Mary on this occasion. Whatever embarrassment Mary might feel at the commencement of this short journey, it was entirely dissipated before they reached Salter. With that delicacy which always accompanies true love, Henry, though perfectly obliging and attentive, was more solicitous to sooth the fears and secure the confidence of his fair champion than to appear particular in his assiduities towards her; and it was only on their approaching so near to the house as to leave Mary the perfect mistress of her own actions that he began to meditate on turning the conversation to the subject nearest to his heart. A short silence ensued, during which they reached an old gate which led into the yard, and their attention being roused by distinctly hearing the sound of different voices, amongst which they could clearly distinguish the words, "Hist, yonder they come!" Henry desiring Mary not to be alarmed, pointed out to her the shadowy forms of three or four men, partly shaded from the moonlight by the overhanging boughs of a large sycamore tree, which stood at one extremity of the building; and what to him was the only circumstance worthy of notice, the two which were most visible evidently wore red coats. "Oh, Henry," said Mary, softly, "what can be the meaning of this? May not these men have murdered my dear mother? I dare say there was not any living being left in the house with her, excepting my old nurse." "Do not fear, my love, for your mother," replied Henry. "Had there been any violence going forward they would not have been standing yonder. But what any of the military can be wanting here at this time I cannot tell; yet be their errand what it may, they can have no business with us." By this time the whole party had clearly perceived that their former conjectures were not well founded; for quitting their retirement, they stationed themselves in the nearest path which led to the door, and the foremost, a stout thickset fellow, with a red coat, exclaimed "I told you it was only some clodhopper with his sweetheart! I will, however, have one smack of her lips; that is, if I think them worth tasting;" and so saying he advanced towards the terrified Mary, encouraged by the jokes of his companions, who appeared quite pleased with an adventure which seemed to promise some fun.

The words of the soldier, and his evident intention of fulfilling them, made Henry instantly quit the side of Mary to interpose between them. "Stand back," said he, "and mind your own business! What right have you to interfere with us?" The red-coat, a sturdy blade, who was in reality afraid of very few men, was by no means disconcerted at the formidable appearance of the manly figure before him. "Keep thy wind to cool thy poddish with, Johnnie," said he, "and when there is a wench in the case, learn to keep out of my way, or I will not be long in teaching thee how to do so in future." "Do not think," replied Henry, "that because there are four of you, that you shall offer any insult to this young woman when in my company. If you persist in your brutish inselence, depend upon it you will repent it." The soldier, perhaps unfortunately for himself, did not rightly construe the threat implied in the latter part of Henry's

address. He imagined that the superiority of number, as well as each of them being armed with a large stick, must deter any but a madman from attempting personal resistance; and as for law, other reasons, independent of the difficulty of recognizing him, made him scoff at the idea. "Why, Johnnie! thinkest thou there is any law for a kiss? No, man, our justices know better than that! Besides, I am a soldier, and could plead privilege. Therefore, stand back! Oh! (seeing Henry determined and preparing to resist him), then will I wring thy nose to teach thee better manners!"

This was the worst joke the soldier had ever been concerned in, for no sooner did he attempt to put his intention into execution, than he was levelled with such tremendous force, that, falling first with his head against the rough pavement, the shock completely stupified him for some time. His foremost comrade immediately advanced to assist him, and aimed a blow at Henry's head with his cudgel. This his adversary avoided, and closing with him, wrenched the stick from his grasp, and at the same time, dashed him to the ground with such violence that he lay as insensible as his companion. The others witnessing this twofold disaster, drew back in terror; and one of them putting his fingers to his mouth whistled aloud. During these transactions Mary was almost petrified with fear; and excepting a loud scream at the commencement of the scuffle, she stood gazing on the combatants with a look of mingled anxiety and terror. Scarcely had Henry liberty to turn his attention towards her, before the door was opened, and her mother and nurse, who had for some time been anxiously expecting the absentees, joined them. When about to retire to rest, they had distinguished strange voices about the house; and extinguishing the lights, they could plainly discover the number, and red coats of the soldiers, as at different times they advanced to the windows, and endeavoured to ascertain what was passing within the house. It was evident to Mrs. Armstrong that their intention was either plunder, or that there was some information against her husband; and either circumstance was sufficient to create alarm. She therefore continued to watch their manœuvres till the arrival of Henry and Mary, and had from an upper window witnessed the whole of the foregoing proceedings. She was very certain that the young man was a stranger to her, and as she had no idea but that some of her relations would accompany Mary home, she was not satisfied of her identity before the scuffle began, when her voice having removed all doubts upon that head, she had lost no time in hastening to her, whatever might be the consequence. She had, however, hardly time to assure herself of Mary's safety, before she observed a number of men hastening from the other extremity of the yard; and being unable to discover any friends amongst them, she endeavoured to hurry the nurse and Mary towards the door, and addressing Henry, she said "Young man, whoever you are, I could wish you to accompany us into the house, otherwise your life will be in danger for the manly part you have taken in this affair, for which give me liberty to tender you such thanks as are in my power. Hasten, I beseech you, before yonder ruffians have time to intercept you, and revenge the chastisement you have so justly given their companions." "I thank you for

the offer," said Henry, "but cannot think of accepting it till I find out what these fellows want. With me I am sure they have no business, and with you they must have still less. But you had better secure the door, while I endeavour to find out their errand." "Oh, Henry!" cried Mary, "I beg of you for my, for your own sake, not to think of waiting here, for they will surely do you a mischief; for see, the two men you knocked down are joining them." "Be pacified," replied Henry, "I will, at all events, see you safe into the house."

This determination, however, seemed to have come too late, for the whole party had gained the door before them. "What the devil is the matter?" said one of the new comers. "I see no occasion you had to whistle." "I think it was full time," replied another, "that young fellow there has nearly killed your brother Tom, and George Tomlinson; or, at least, has given them reason to remember him as long as they live." "Then, by my grandfather's beard," said the other, "he shall have his ears cropped for his pains, if my name be Stephen Jemmison." "Who talks of cropping my ears?" said Henry, advancing up to the numerous party. "That, let me tell you, is what a regiment of such cowardly rascals cannot do. Ha! Parker, is that you? Do you send for these fellows to plunder the country, and insult every person that falls in their way?"

The person whom Henry had thus distinguished was a little slender man dressed in a blue coat, party coloured waistcoat, and light mixture pantaloons. His height, which was supposed not to exceed five feet, was something augmented by a large high-crowned hat, while a pair of broad silver shoe-buckles could, even in the shaded moon light, be discovered glittering across his feet, and added to the natural consequence which the little personage seemed to derive from being the evident director of the formidable band around him.

Jonah Parker was the owner of a pretty large estate in Ennerdale, and being rather consequential in his notions and ideas, he was, though as timorous in mind as diminutive in body, seldom destitute of a quarrel on his hands with some or other of his neighbours, and was a complete pest to the few magistrates in the vicinity of Whitehaven by constantly teasing them with frivolous complaints, which, originating from trifling causes, had latterly assumed a more serious aspect. His vanity was of that species which consists in recapitulating imaginary instances of influence and consequence, which, while it induced him to remedy every real or supposed transgression affecting his importance, by resorting to law was in itself not only a fertile expedient for furnishing him with opportunities for exercising what seemed his favourite pursuit, but kept him in continual hot water through dread of the consequences of these litigious proceedings respecting his personal safety. The resentment of some of his marauding neighbours had begun to display itself by frequent depredations upon his property, which his fragile form and timid spirit made it almost impossible for him to detect; and in those times it was dangerous for men of a very different stamp to hazard an information. Jonah was therefore considered fair game, and many of the unlucky lads in the vicinity amused themselves with whimsical allusions to his christened name, and laughing at the quaint and pompous propriety of speech

in which he prided himself when reprimanding them, a habit which he had contracted in his youth, probably owing to his mother being one of the Society of Friends. Henry Clementson, to whom he was well known, had sometimes relieved Jonah from very unenviable situations when chance had led him into company where he was not treated with common civility, and this had made him somewhat a favourite with Parker, but the latter's inveterate habit of speaking disrespectfully of every one but himself had caused Henry to treat him with very little ceremony. Jonah was extremely anxious to preserve the semblance of friendship between them, conceiving it might prove serviceable to him in future, as it sometimes had upon previous occasions; therefore, roughly as Henry had accosted him, he readily replied, "No, good master Henry; you, I am sure, know that I respect the laws of our sovereign liege too much to aid or assist in any transgressions of them; and, therefore, if yonder two men have been either plundering (or insulting you, or that goodly young woman, they have but met with their deserts for disobeying my commands, and the orders they elsewhere received respecting that man of violence, Tom Lucas, of Stockhow, and his bawling associate, Will Sinclair, who I suspect have not only laid unjust hands upon part of my goods, but are even now concerned in defrauding the revenue of our good king. Therefore, good master Henry Clementson, till we meet again, I wish you health and good morning. I tell ye, comrades," added he, turning to his companions and lowering his voice, "that young man is my good friend; and it were dangerous to molest him, both as it would be a gross violation of the law, and what is a better reason with some of you, because ye will gain nothing by meddling with him." After this lengthy oration, Mr. Jonah Parker departed with his company towards Stockhow, and Henry Clementson accompanied Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter into their dwelling.

"If I judge rightly," said Henry, turning to Mrs. Armstrong, "the urgency of the occasion must preclude ceremony between us, and excuse the liberty which, as a stranger, I may appear to take in your affairs. These men are undoubtedly abroad on some information which Parker out of revenge has laid against your neighbour Lucas, and in which your husband and his brother-in-law are concerned; and should they meet while engaged in any illegal transaction, the consequences may be serious. This, therefore, I will without any delay endeavour to prevent. I know where I can find Walter, and will bid you farewell for the present," and, without allowing time for a reply, Henry hastened out of the house.

"Mary," said the watchful mother, "great as our obligations appear to be to this young man, was it consistent with prudence to be alone at this hour with a man who is an entire stranger to you? for, however the circumstance of his attending you home may prove fortunate, it cannot excuse any impropriety on your part. I know Henry Clementson by report, and though that, generally speaking, is in his favour, he is certainly considered a dangerous acquaintance for a young woman." "Dear mother, I never saw him before this day, or rather yesterday; but my father was aware of his being in the same company with me, and Walter accompanied us nearly home." "Aye,

aye," said the nurse, who loved Mary as well as if she had been her own child, "you need not be alarmed. I was sure Mary would act prudently, and as it has fallen out I am glad of it; for if any other person had been with her, you saw into what hands she would have fallen. I never saw a bolder nor braver young man, and I hope it may be in his power to prevent any further mischief." Leaving the kind and garrulous old nurse to convince good dame Armstrong of the propriety of the measure Mary had been obliged to adopt, we must now detail the future proceedings of Henry Clementson on this busy and eventful night.

Henry was not long in retracing his steps to Eskat, and fortunately met with Walter just as he had quitted the house. "Walter," said he, "do you know whether your father and uncle have any transactions with Tom Lucas and his gang at this time? If they have, there is no time to lose if you want to prevent mischief." "They have." "Then let us lose no time in endeavouring to find them, and I will acquaint you on the road with what has happened." "I know they intended to cross the common, and take the road towards Kirkland, which I think we had best intersect at the nearest point." The morning was by this time beginning to break, and the two active young men hastened without further delay towards that part of the road Walter had pointed out. The distance, though trifling, was sufficient for Henry to detail what he had witnessed since they parted. Having reached the place specified, and ascertained that nothing had recently passed, they were for a few minutes uncertain how to proceed; but a distinct sound of the tramp of horses, urged forward by different voices, soon convinced them that they were in the right track, and they accordingly crouched behind the hedge to await the approach of the numerous cavalcade.

"There must have been some treachery," said Walter. "This brandy was landed at Barrowmouth some weeks ago, and has been concealed in that neighbourhood ever since, as we were conscious some information was on foot. In order to insure its safe removal, a false notice was put in Parker's way as from a friend, informing him that there would be a quantity of contraband goods removed to Robinson's, of Long Moor, on Monday night next, and assuring him that they would be found at Wath, at midnight. It is certain that Parker would not fail to endeavour to turn this information to account, because he knows Robinson is connected with Lucas and Brown, whom he blames for plundering him. It was therefore agreed that Brown and Westray should appear publicly at the races, that Willy Sinclair should apprise them of its arrival at Arlecdon Moor, and that it should be conveyed a different route, and secreted at Salter and Stockhow till Monday evening, when they would accompany my uncle and Tommy with it eastward, till it was either disposed of, or he fell in with his associates with whom he could exchange it for whisky. Parker, it evidently appears from your account, has procured better information; it clearly proves that some of the party are concerned in it, and should they be discovered, there is no judging of the consequence, as Brown for one would stop little short of murder, and perhaps would not scruple at that. But see,

yonder they come! Would they not prove a match think you for all the men that Parker had with him?" Henry could now plainly discover a body of not less than twenty horses, which, from the comparative silence with which they travelled, he imagined were shod with leather. They appeared heavily laden, and were guarded by apparently more than a dozen stout men, armed with sticks and bludgeons, stationed at different points along their line of march; who, rendered confident both by their formidable number, and the precautions they had previously taken, were carelessly journeying along with the utmost indifference. On the near approach of the foremost horse, Walter put his fingers to his mouth and gave a pretty loud whistle. The change this produced in their movements was instantaneously visible. The horses were stopped in a moment; and on Walter's repeating his whistle, the whole party, ready for action, drew up in front of the leader with the most determined resolution. "Nantz!" said Walter, aloud, and one of the party answering, "All's well," he immediately, accompanied by Henry, sprung over the hedge, the latter of whom now clearly recognised the whole of the party he had left at Arlecdon. "What is your reason for this conduct?" said his father, angrily? "Is this a joking transaction, think you?" "Reason enough!" said Walter, hastily; "Parker has excisemen and soldiers stationed both at Salter and Stockhow. It is no joke, for Henry both saw, and had a scuffle with them; therefore, determine quickly what is to be done." "By the mother that bore me, Nixon," said Lucas, seizing one of the party by the collar, "I would think as little of cutting thy windpipe as the throat of a sheep! There are only Sinclair and thee who could inform; and Parker and thee were seen together at Whitehaven on Thursday last." "Damn him," said Brown, "if I were sure he was guilty, I would sooner crack his skull than the shell of a hazel nut! and if it lies between Sinclair and him, the thing is certain; for Sinclair knew the road we were to come, and therefore if he had been implicated, you would have been intercepted before you left Preston Quarter." "You judge me wrongfully," said Nixon, whose confusion however, was evident to all; "if I had been so inclined, what was there to hinder me from carrying the officers to where it was so long concealed? Was the place unknown to me?" "That is very true," said Brown, "I know not what to think." "I tell you what, lads," said Sinclair, "I hate an informer, as I do the devil or a Frenchman; and, therefore, if any one of you will abide by me, if I do not convince you in the course of a few hours, from Parker's own mouth, who gave him the information, gibbet me, that's all!" "Then here am I at thy service," said Richie Foster. "And if thou attemptest to play me false, I will twist thy neck about, if I swing for it." "Agreed," said Sinclair. "I give you full liberty. Let Nixon be kept out of the way, and the brandy safely bestowed, and then we will be off. So let us to work, for the day is breaking fast."

All were again instantly in motion. Three or four men chosen by Lucas were despatched in different directions to prevent the approach of any unwelcome intruders, and the horses proceeded at a more rapid pace towards Kirkland. On reaching Thistlegill, down

which there was a foot-path which led directly to Stockhow, the procession halted; and while part of the company speedily unloaded the horses, others conveyed the casks a certain distance down the path-way, where they were received by Lucas and Robinson, assisted by the Fosters and Armstrongs; so that the greatest part of the gang could not be certain of the precise spot where the lading was deposited. Of this knowledge they were, of course, extremely jealous; but Lucas, well aware of Henry's character, and conscious that from his seeming intimacy with the Armstrong party, that he was either privy to the whole transaction, or too daring and formidable to be thwarted, suffered him to act as he thought proper. Henry, therefore, without opposition, accompanied them to the vault, and was astonished at the ingenuity displayed in the contrivance and execution of it. Thistle-gill is a small unequal valley, abounding with limestone, large masses of which protrude in some places above the surface of the green sward, and in others it is covered with a strata of mould of different depths, upon which, at irregular distances, grew considerable beds of whins. The vault had been originally constructed by enlarging a large natural fissure in the rock to a proper size, the entrance to which was only of sufficient dimensions to admit a man creeping on all fours, but was sufficiently capacious within to contain an immense quantity of casks, or any other article which it was necessary to conceal. They had contrived to place a pretty strong oaken door, the hinges of which were protected from the earth, by iron plates fastened so as to prevent any obstruction to the raising of the door, which being covered some inches thick with mould, was green as the turf beside it, and imperceptible to the keenest scrutiny by being overshadowed by whins growing around, and even upon it. The storage being completed, the door of the vault was closed; and all being considered safe, the whole party re-assembled upon the road. After a short conversation it was agreed that those men and horses from the vicinity of Whitehaven should return back without delay; and it was intimated to Nixon, who accompanied them, that if he separated himself from the man who was deputed to keep a strict eye upon him till further information was procured, he would be considered guilty, and must abide by the consequences. Henry, after assuring Walter he would see him according to his previous promise, mounted one of the returning horses, as he both knew, and was known to several of the party. Richie Foster and Sinclair, selecting one of the best horses belonging to Lucas, departed together, while Robinson, Lucas, and the Armstrongs, with Tommy Foster, chose the old narrow lane which at that time divided Salter from Stockhow, as it led equally to their respective residences. The diminished band pushed on quickly and without molestation till they had nearly reached the road leading to Stockhow on the left, when a shrill whistle, which was repeated in different directions, indicated that Parker and his associates were yet on the look out for them. As they had now nothing to fear, they continued leisurely to advance till they had reached the gate, when they were immediately surrounded by a strong party of men, one of whom, well known to them as an officer in the customs, commanded them to stop in the king's name. "By all means, sir," answered

Lucas, with an archness peculiar to him, "we are the king's good subjects, and bound to obey. What is your pleasure with us?" "Tell me where you have been, and what you have been about?" rejoined the officer. "You will be pleased to confine yourself to your own business," said Lucas, "and leave us to manage our own. What if you have been delivering grain: who shall gainsay it, or what is it to you? See, here are our yoads and bags. If you can justify stopping us on the highway, show us your authority for detaining us? or else look to your situation, Mr. Charles." "I am bound to inform you," said the officer again, "that I was sent out on an information against you for smuggling brandy. But as there does not appear to be any in your possession at this time, I cannot detain you. You are therefore at liberty to pass on." "There is no minding what some people will say," answered Lucas, "such stories might ruin a man's good name. But I live in a good neighbourhood, and I dare say, if need be, my good friend Parker will be bound for me to the amount of his whole property; as he knows me to be an honest man and a peaceable subject. Do you not, Mr. Parker?" "Mind your own business, Tom Lucas," answered the little personage alluded to. "I would not be bound for you to the amount of a hedge-sparrow's nest, if all the eggs were rotten! So I desire you will spare yourself the trouble of making free with my name." "Indeed, Jonah!" replied Lucas, with a leer not to be misunderstood, "I prophesied that instead of a damaged bird's nest you would not have bolted at a whale! But as I prove to be mistaken, I will divest my stomach of the idea, and then we will tread the dry land on equal terms together:" and instantly thrusting his head forward, he imitated a violent reaching, amidst the unrestrained laughter of the greater part of the company, who were well aware of the allusion, and were prepared for it by a knowledge of the reciprocal ill terms on which they had been for some time.

Nothing could exceed the paroxysm of rage into which this flight of Lucas's, and the mirth it excited, threw Mr. Jonah Parker. He sometimes honoured Lucas with all the opprobrious epithets he could recollect; then threatened law, and even expressed an intention of fighting him with pistols upon the spot. "Hear ye, gentlemen," said Lucas, "if he be not using unwarrantable language respecting my unsullied character; and wishing me to break the peace by fighting him a duel, contrary to the laws of this land. I take you all to witness his blood-thirsty intention, for which I will have satisfaction, if there be any justice in Cumberland." The enraged little gentleman, finding himself ridiculed and laughed at even by his own party, whom he could perceive were mortified at his imperfect information, and judging himself safe from personal molestation on his road home by leaving the enemies he most dreaded in company with the officer and military, departed without further ceremony.

As soon as the loud and general burst of laughter at Parker's abrupt departure was subsided, Lucas, turning to the officer, said, "I believe you and these lads have been upon a foolish errand, and are not over and above provided for it. We are within a stone's throw of my house, and you are welcome to a slice of cold beef, and, it may be, a dram into the bargain, before you take the road to Whitehaven."

The party needed no second invitation, and Lucas amply fulfilled his pledge. After treating them with such provision as his dwelling afforded, he produced a large grey bottle, and the wholesome beverage which it contained was too welcome to cause any inquiries into his manner of procuring it. After suffering each individual to drink as much as he deemed prudent, (for Lucas would have desired no better fun than making them all too drunk to be able to reach home) the officer thanked Lucas for his hospitality; and after cursing Parker heartily, and declaring he should not bring them there on a similar errand, the whole party set out on their return to Whitehaven.

Meanwhile, Jonah Parker, in no very enviable state of mind, held on his course, and had nearly reached his own residence when he discovered a horse with a halter and pack saddle upon it, grazing in the lane which led to his house: and at some little distance from it, a man lying on the road and groaning in seeming agony. The increasing light and proximity to his own dwelling had their due effect upon the courage of the disconsolate Jonah; and not doubting but it was one of the smugglers who had been intoxicated, and met with an accident, he approached him in the expectation of learning the particulars of their expedition, and in what point his information had been deficient. The man on his approach made a seeming ineffectual attempt to rise; and Jonah, advancing close up to him, inquired if he had met with any misfortune. "I have broke my leg," was the reply; "will you assist me to reach the hedge?" Parker observed that the man before him was a perfect Hercules, and on taking hold of his arm to aid his efforts to rise, the seeming cripple raised himself up, and, before Jonah could recover from his astonishment, threw the mouth of a large sack over his head, and completely enveloped him in it. "Jonah Parker," said he, "listen to my directions, and abide by them if thou regardest thy safety. I will but convey thee to a place where thou wilt have to answer to a plain question. If thou doest so truly, no harm shall befall thee; but if otherwise, thou must risk the consequences. Shouldst thou once attempt to call for help, or offer any resistance, thy folly be upon thine own head; for I will directly throw both thee and the sack into the river, and thou art the best judge how thou wilt be able to save thyself from drowning; therefore, silence, if thou prizest thy own safety." These terrible threats were sufficient to terrify the helpless being into perfect submission. The sack was made fast below his feet, his gigantic insnarer lifted him like a child upon the horse, which another had meanwhile seized, and made ready for the load; and while one of them mounted and secured him from falling, the other, running alongside of the horse, urged him to exertion, and poor Jonah, half dead with terror, was rapidly hurried along he knew not whither.

The journey, to the great relief of Parker, was not of long duration. At one part of the road he was almost tempted to call for assistance. A voice, which he thought he could recognise, called, "Hollo, whore's ta for, Sinclair? What's that thou's gotten befowre thee?" The voice of his guard was, however, instantly audible enough. "D--n ye, be off about thy own business, or I'll

break every bone in thy skin." These words, followed by a patting of feet, resembling a race between the parties, again determined Parker to preserve silence; and a few minutes more brought him to the place of his destination. The horse stopped; his escort arrived; and after a whispering conversation, in which he could distinguish three or four different voices, he was taken off the pad and carried up some steps within the reach of a chained mastiff, which he could easily guess by his growls, though evidently kept fast by some one connected with him. He was then laid gently down upon a couch of straw, and the same voice, which was the only undisguised one he had yet heard, thus addressed him, "Mr. Jonah Parker, I will allow thee sufficient time for rest, after thy uncalled-for labour of last night, and thou mayest meanwhile consider of thy answer to my question, which is briefly, who gave thee the information which caused thy present captivity, instead of sleeping in thine own bed? It is impossible for thee to escape, even if thou wert left there at full liberty; but if thou movest from thy present situation, thou wilt fall within the reach of a dog which will tear thee to pieces. A strict watch wilt be kept that thou art not molested; and therefore till thou art wanted, I leave thee to thy repose;" and, without allowing the terrified creature to reply, they bolted the door, leaving the dog chained inside, and departed, laughing at his misfortunes.

The Sabbath morning was far advanced before the family of Robin Armstrong met at breakfast, which on that day generally consisted of milk boiled with oatmeal, or bread made of the same material, and commonly called *havre bread*; or *coomed milk*, that is, milk designed for cheese in its first state of preparation, before it is broken from the curds, and separated from the whey, or watery fluid which forms a part of its composition; and bread, cheese, and butter. His mother had talked to Walter on his coming home, respecting his leaving Mary alone with a stranger to her. "What if I did, mother?" he replied. "He was no stranger to me; and you can yourself judge if he was not as willing, and much more able, to protect than I was; and my father can inform you I was expected elsewhere." "If I were as well satisfied of his intentions and principles, as I am assured of his readiness and ability to protect her, I could not blame you for the part you have acted. But I see you are all eager to silence me by dwelling more on those qualifications which are more owing to Providence than his own merit; which, indeed, may accord with them for anything I know to the contrary; and, therefore, I will not mention the subject again." Richie had acquainted the other three with the trick which Sinclair and he had played Parker, at which they laughed heartily; and Walter had related the accidental manner in which Henry had gained a knowledge of their proceedings, and his scuffle with the soldiers; which last transaction the nurse had dwelt upon with some exaggeration. "Mary," said Tommy, while at breakfast, "if I had accompanied you home, I would have done my best to have defended you as well as Clementson, but whether I would have succeeded or not I cannot tell. I wish, however, I had been there to help him to thrash a few more of the impudent rascals." "Hold your tongue, Tommy Foster," said the old nurse;

"you are a bold and a brave gallant enough, but ye will never be the man that stands in yon laddie's shoes. After he had doused the two chaps that first engaged with him, when that red-coated loun—I hated a red coat all my life—talked of cropping his ears, he bounced up to the pack of them as if they had been bantlings! and if his very name had not frightened them, I doubt not but he would have cracked the skulls of one half of them. But the fray ended in good time, and I hope there is no mischief done." "Come come, nurse, you speak largely; otherwise they had been but a set of awkward boobies, and quite unfit for the errand they came upon. But I only meant to say I would do my best for Mary any time, and I shall think better of this Harry Clementson all my life for his conduct in her behalf, though he hindered me of both the belt and gloves; did he not, uncle?" "Ye forget, Tom," said Walter, "that I was standing; and if my uncle had laid down to you, I would have given you a twist for the belt. At any rate, I would have kept you tighter to your work than you did Henry." "Aye, so thou wouldest, lad," said Richie, "or else it would not have been worth looking at. Tom had, indeed, no chance at all with him, and he sprung over me like a bladder before I knew what I was about! But no matter, he is a brave fellow, and it does not grieve me to be thrown by a good man.

But however much one part of the family might exult in the transactions of the preceding night, and anticipate their future prospects with satisfaction, this was by no means the case with either Mrs. Armstrong or her lovely daughter. The former, independent of her fears for Mary, who, she was afraid, was captivated with the manly disposition and pleasing exterior of Henry Clementson, had always been, in the just acceptation of the word, a truly religious woman. She had always opposed, as far as prudence permitted, the illegal pursuits of her husband; for however such proceedings may be glossed over in the opinions of the world, she felt convinced, that every premeditated violation of the laws of her country must be an offence in the sight of God; and she knew, by melancholy experience, that they were the grave of all moral and religious duties. Robin Armstrong had, ever since their marriage, been concerned in illicit distillation and contraband trade; and even his removal to his present residence had been influenced by the importance of establishing an entire link of communication throughout the county, under the immediate inspection of some of the band with which he was connected; without trusting, or participating in all their dealings with Brown and his associates, by whom they had a suspicion of being oftentimes duped. The consequences of this desultory mode of life had been to him what it is to many who neglect their lawful avocations for the pursuit of uncertain gain: what he sometimes gained by a fortunate speculation, he lost through want of due attention to his more indispensable, but not less pressing affairs; and Robin Armstrong, after twenty years of incessant fatigue and anxiety, during which he had toiled as much by night as during the day, and as far as regarded himself, had blended the Sabbath in the same undistinguished chaos, was not one jot nearer attaining that *ignis-fatuus* which yet glittered before his eyes, and was still the loadstone of his actions, than at

the commencement of his arduous pursuit. His temper and disposition, which were cool and wary, had preserved him from engaging in any very outrageous acts of violence; and had his principles not revolted at the committal or connivance of petty robberies, he was too wise to hazard his life or reputation for the chance of such trifling remunerations. Very few men are totally regardless, or wholesale villains; yet Robin Armstrong, such as we have described him, made no hesitation in engaging in illegal speculations with those whom he knew stopped at nothing. This conduct had been a source of unremitting sorrow to his wife; for some years his frequent absence for successive nights had alarmed her for his personal safety; but these fears had gradually, through long continuance, partly subsided. Finding every endeavour on her part to wean him from his habitual pursuits wholly ineffectual, she deemed it her duty to desist from the attempt, rather than hazard the entire alienation of his affection, and the loss of that attention and regard with which he treated her judgment in regard to his other concerns, and which she was aware she had frequently endangered. In this prudent line of conduct she had been encouraged to persevere, as well by the hope that he would in time be taught the folly and sinfulness of his pursuits, as by her affection for her children, and her fears for their future and eternal welfare. Agreeably with this determination, she had neglected nothing to procure them every advantage consistent with her means and ability, in the hopes of preserving Walter from the contagion of his father's example, but this was not in her power altogether to prevent. His active disposition naturally prompted him to be a partaker in the secret dealings of his father, which, when in his company, he had very erroneously been taught to consider both manly and laudable; which hypothesis he was the less inclined to scrutinize as his mother, from the delicacy in censuring the conduct of her husband in her son's hearing, had seldom ventured openly to condemn. In many other respects he was all that she could wish. He was bold and courageous, but at the same time kind, volatile, and placid in his disposition. His duty towards his parents could not be exceeded; and his brotherly regard for Mary was unbounded, for when her safety or character were in question, his own were considered as nothing; and as yet he had manifested no great remissness in his religious duties, a thing which she justly deemed of paramount importance. With Mary she had every reason to be still better satisfied. She was, indeed, all that she could have hoped to see her; fair, and good in every relative meaning to which the word is applicable. Mary, young as she was, had had several respectable suitors; but her affections being wholly unengaged, she had neither kept company nor given the least encouragement to any of them. In doing so she had acted entirely at her own option. Her father, when applied to, always observed "that his wife was more likely to know his daughter's mind on such subjects than himself;" and her mother, after giving her opinion, desired her "to be ruled by her own inclinations and discretion."

The transactions of the last few hours were to Mary Armstrong the subject of more regret than satisfaction. It was sufficiently evident

to her, that her father, since his residence at Salter, had intimately connected himself with some of the most desperate and dreaded characters in the neighbourhood; and that the connection was by no means destitute of danger, she herself had already witnessed a most convincing proof. Her uncle and cousin were undoubtedly joined in the enterprize; and Walter, it was more than probable, had also some share in it; all which events were to her mother and herself subjects of bitter disappointment and regret. Her acquaintance with Henry Clementson was also, on reflection, fraught with many disagreeable sensations. His manners, behaviour, and education were, she was satisfied, very superior to what she had ever had an opportunity of witnessing; and with whatever reluctance the discovery was accompanied, she felt her affections were no longer unengaged. It was certain that he was quite unconnected with all her father's transactions, and, she had observed, evidently despised his associates, Brown and Westray. How much better could he in reality believe their companions to be? and the next question that presented itself was, in what light must she herself, as the daughter of Robin Armstrong, appear in his estimation? These were interrogatories very difficult to solve. On reviewing the whole of what had passed between them individually, she could find nothing to condemn on either side. The time that she had passed in his company was chiefly in the presence, or at least under the eye of Walter; and his accompanying them, or rather her, home, was directly sanctioned by her father, and so far countenanced by Walter, that putting her own inclinations out of the question, she had scarcely the power to choose. With Henry's conduct throughout, but more particularly towards her, it was impossible to find fault. The quarrel with her uncle she did not see; and of the wrestling she could scarcely be called a spectator: the crowd was great, and she was not anxious to witness the contests. In the result of the meetings between Henry and her uncle and cousin, she felt interested so far as to wish them over without injury, as she could learn from the crowd before her, that there was either some dispute, or at least something more than common attending them; but when this formidable champion was called against her brother, her anxiety for the safety of Walter, whom she clearly understood would not have the slightest chance, was painfully acute; and when she learned they were entering the ring together, most truly welcome to her were the words of a homely-dressed man before her, "A duen't think it'll be a wussel at o! Nea! it's just es a thowt! Clementson hes gi'en up't belt to't young lad, en its reet en'nuef; he's wussel'd varra weel, en Harry cud'a gitten nea credit by fellen t'like o' him." Towards her his conduct had been equally attentive and respectful; and his delicacy in avoiding any question or action, in their solitary walk from Eskat, which could tend to embarrass her in the slightest degree, pleased her much more than his readiness to prevent any insult from being offered to her with impunity; and his subsequent conduct on that eventful morning, which had probably prevented the most serious consequences, she could not only justly appreciate, but impute to the right source, namely, the great regard which he professed to entertain for her.

So far she saw nothing either to regret or alarm her; but their interview with old Ellen Anderson, with whom Henry evidently appeared to be a favourite, was, as far as such prognostications were entitled to any consideration, of quite a different character. What had the old woman been? Where did she reside? and what, except the conviction that she was acting under some irresistible impulse which she believed infallible, and which she either could or would not gainsay, could determine her to foretell evil to Henry whom she professed to esteem, and to her whom she had no reason to dislike? She saw the prediction was not without its effect, even upon the bold and resolute spirit of her lover; that he who was alike reckless of numbers and threatened violence from men of the most formidable character shook at the words of a poor and feeble old woman! Walter had intimated to her that he expected Henry in the course of the day; and from him, if she had an opportunity, she was resolved to inquire some particulars relative to the singular being whom they had so strangely met with. Amidst this labyrinth of perplexities she was summoned by her mother to accompany her to church, a command she gladly obeyed, as calculated to soothe the anxiety of her mind; and Walter and Tommy being ready to accompany them, they set out for Ennerdale Bridge without further delay.

Nor was Henry meanwhile without his share of perplexities. When he thought of Mary, he firmly believed that his future happiness was involved in the progress he could make in her affections; and though he was well enough satisfied with what had yet passed between them, he dreaded the forebodings of old Ellen Anderson as well for the misery it portended as the influence it might have in deterring Mary from keeping company with him. Should he, on a second interview, be as well pleased with Mary as he was inclined to believe, he resolved to see the old woman without delay, and entreat her by every means in her power to disclose all she knew, or apprehended, relative to his connexion with Mary Armstrong. Her mother he had heard highly spoken of at Eskat; and Walter seemed to possess many amiable qualities, but he appeared intimately acquainted with the connexion his father had formed with that gang of desperadoes which were the terror of the peaceable part of the neighbourhood. In illicit dealings he had never been implicated further than an occasional acquaintance with some of those who regularly pursued that course of life as their sole means of support; and of some of whom he had sometimes purchased a cask to divide along with others who had jointly subscribed towards it. He did not, therefore, consider smuggling a very heinous offence; but he felt that an intimate connexion with the daughter of a smuggler would degrade him even in his own eyes. Determined, however, to keep his engagement with Walter, and to regulate his conduct by future events, he rose and dressed himself, on receiving a message by one of his sister's little ones, that breakfast was ready, and waiting for him in the parlour.

It was an invariable rule every Sunday in the well-regulated family of Edward Wilson, that on the conclusion of their necessary and indispensable morning's labour, every member of his household should, before breaking their fast, assemble in the parlour, where

prayers were read, either by Henry or himself. This was a duty that Henry was never known to neglect; and for which he rightly judged his wanderings over night, instead of forming an excuse, rendered the more necessary. "Are you not well, Henry?" said his sister, when he entered the apartment. "We have waited for you for some time." There was a mixture of confusion and perplexity in Henry's countenance, which occasioned some misgivings in the mind of Margaret Wilson as to the correctness of his "Yes, never better." Henry, however, very collectedly read the prayers, and a portion of scripture, which were often previously selected by his sister; and concluded the devotion of the morning, as usual, with an extempore prayer of his own. The religious deportment of Edward Wilson and his amiable wife, though regular and sincerely devout, was entirely divested of all unnecessary austerity. Upon one point only did they ever expostulate with Henry respecting his duties as a believing member in the doctrines of Christianity: this was his frequent absence on Sunday afternoons, and which sometimes extended throughout the evening, a custom, indeed, common enough in that as in the present time, but which was never sanctioned by their example. After breakfast, therefore, in answer to some questions put to Henry by Edward's little boy, it was with much regret they understood that he had engaged himself for that afternoon; and this chagrin was consequently further augmented by learning that he did not expect to return before their usual bed time. Edward Wilson very seldom chose to express his disapprobation of any part of Henry's conduct openly; but his wife, who considered herself fully warranted in so doing by their near relationship, was not so delicate. "Indeed, brother," said she, "your manner of witnessing the first appearance and departure of the Sabbath you yourself must needs think is not very commendable. May I ask where you intend to spend the evening?" "You are perfectly welcome, sister, provided you allow me the same liberty in answering." "Were you at Eskat last night?" "Yes." "Perhaps further?" "Yes." "At Salter, then?" "Yes." "Then is it there you are going to this afternoon?" "Yes." "Edward says Robin Armstrong's daughter is very pretty. Do you think so?" "Yes." "Then I would much rather you would not go, for you have not waved any of my interrogatories, and as it is seldom so much sincerity on such subjects is accompanied with much love, you will perhaps oblige me by stopping at home." "A very modest request, truly! I am civilly desired to break my word, because, though I am allowed to be sincere, it is presumed I am not so! and"—"Hush, I am content to change the subject. Will you go to Cleator with us this morning?" "With all my heart."

At the period we treat of, the custom of erecting tombstones to perpetuate the memory of departed friends was not, in this county at least, carried to the extent to which it has arrived at the present time, when the wandering idler may amuse himself, or the contemplative Christian improve an hour, by rambling through a country churchyard. and learn, by referring to the tablets above, by what names the tenants of the mansions beneath them were once distinguished. Of these attractive, though unavailing *memento mori*, the sur-

sounding inclosure of the village church of Ennerdale was then nearly destitute, a circumstance, however, which neither tended to promote nor impede the edification of the parishioners in general, as the churchyard was, on a fine Sunday morning, for some time previous to the commencement of the service, an habitual resort for the more noisy and volatile part of the intended congregation. With country people in general, no journey of an equal distance appears so short or delightful as their walk to church on a Sunday. The rustic swain, just freed from a week's incumbrance of beard, clogs, and according habiliments, seems to derive new vigour from shaven chin, slender shoes, and Sunday "cloas," and moves on the Sabbath light and elastic, like what he is, certainly, but very different from his wonted tread during the previous period of his six days' labour; and the movements of the blooming maiden are, it must be allowed, rendered more graceful and enchanting by some similar or equally conclusive reason. There is likewise at that time an additional motive by which all are governed, that is, a self-complacency arising from the consciousness of performing an expected and indisputable duty, which appears equally to bind those who attend to see and be seen—to blind others, but themselves the most, by the desire of appearing to be actuated by what they have no claim to, and those who are guided by a true spirit of devotion. But while I point out reasons, the truth of which will be admitted by all, I leave each individual to select for himself the particular motive he may choose to assign for his own attendance. But this is perhaps irrelevant. Let us return to the story.

On entering the churchyard, the party from Salter could observe an unusual assemblage of rustics, who, regardless of the chiming bell, were gathered round, and listening to the strange surmises of Jacob Johnstone, who was then husbandman and factotum to Jonah Parker. Any disaster of that gentleman, if not decidedly serious, was sure to decide the grins and provoke the wit of his rustic neighbours, amongst whom he was no favourite; and Johnstone's strange account of the disappearance of his master was only answered by advising him to have Mr. Parker called at church and market all round the country, offering a reward to whoever produced him, whether dead or alive, and proposed that the clerk should commence with the usual "O, yes," after service on that very day. Honest Jacob knew well enough by the laughs and jeers which accompanied this advice that it was meant to provoke him, and his contracted brow and sullen eye bore evident tokens of his knowledge; but his tormentors soon twisted the story to assimilate with a subject upon which they knew he could not govern himself. It was pretty clear that Jacob's tongue, though glib enough relative to last night's transactions, did not give free utterance to all he thought upon the subject; and the significant glances with which he sometimes honoured Willy Sinclair fully indicated to the surrounding spectators that he suspected that mischievous wag of being concerned in some plot relative to his master. Jacob Johnstone and his worthy dame dwelt in a cottage belonging to and immediately adjoining the residence of Jonah Parker; and Jonan sometimes, for lack of better company, sat and chatted therein, possibly

when the master of the tenement was absent; and his friendly intimacy was, as is often the case, perhaps without any other foundation, construed to the prejudice of both parties by the neighbouring gossips; and to any allusion respecting it, Jacob was most tremblingly alive. This, therefore, was the theme chosen to make Jacob unfold what he seemed to consider a secret of some importance. "What thinks'ta, Willy?" said a rustic, with a leer which brightened up the countenances of his auditors. "Wad'ent it be queer to co' a statesman about like a two-year-auld heifer?" "Nut at o'," replied Willy, "Jacob can tell his marks, and sumbody 'el find em, nea doubt." "Marks, gowk! What marks! We o' know he's nather tail nor horns!" "Na, we o' know nea sic things," said Willy, with a knowing wink to the surrounding rabble, the object of which could not be misunderstood. "Jacob's wife's likeliest to know that ev' anybody."

The general laughter which accompanied this witticism was fully adequate to its intended object. Jacob Johnstone gnashed his teeth in an ecstasy of rage, and, fixing his eyes, red and rolling with passion upon Sinclair, exclaimed, "A tell tha Will Sinclair, thy tongue's nea scandal; en maer ner that, if maister is'nt at wyam to neet, 'al hev thee tyan up to'mowrn for robbin' and murderin' 'em. A knew thee en Tom Luccus's Smiler weel eneuff; en if him et chessed ma wassent that girt fella et wussel'd Clementson yesterda', my naim is'nt Jacob Johnstone, that's 'o.'" Before Willy could reply to this passionate harangue, the bell ceased tolling, a circumstance conclusive of the near approach of the minister; and Jacob, not perhaps in the most fitting mood for devotion, darted into the church, and was at least truly grateful for the protection it afforded him from the scoffs of suspicious neighbours.

Of the latter part of this dialogue, Mrs. Armstrong was a painful listener. From her recollection of what seemed passing at Salter, she felt convinced that Parker was at least detained in custody by the gang, for some purpose of their own; and that, of course, this same Willy Sinclair and her husband's brother-in-law, (for Richie Foster had married Robin Armstrong's sister) were principally concerned; and her fears for the worst made her seize the first opportunity of learning from Walter what had become of, or what they meant to do with Parker. Accordingly, having suffered her daughter and Tommy Forster to precede them on their return, she instantly broke up the subject to her son. "Walter, you may easily see the sinful folly, though you cannot foretel the consequences, of last night's transactions. You see the very entrance to the church has become the scene of licentious scandal and unhallowed jests, connected with some lawless outrage in consequence of them; and if you are privy to the detention of this man, by those who would not scruple to go much further than perhaps you imagine, you are equally guilty, both in the sight of God and the just laws of your country. Tell me, then, what purpose such outrageous violence is intended to answer?" Walter would gladly have evaded a direct reply, but he saw his mother was not to be diverted from the question; and as he had never wilfully deceived her, he found himself necessitated to ac-

quaint her with all that had happened. "Believe me, Walter," said she, when he had finished his story, "no good can finally result from these lawless and mysterious proceedings. You see the danger you last night avoided, by mere accident. Had Mary not been with you at the races, or had this Henry Clementson been less active and daring, you would have fallen in with the party which were purposely watching you; and any resistance, which would doubtless have been the case, besides being probably the occasion of some lives being lost, would have been prosecuted to the utmost extent of the law. Therefore, as far as you have any influence with these desperate men, try to prevail with them to liberate Parker speedily, and without injury." To this advice Walter promised implicit obedience. "Should my endeavours prove unavailing," said he, "I will speak to Henry, whom I expect to see this afternoon; and his opinion and interference cannot fail to prove effectual, as they are completely in his power, and they well know that any attempt to silence him by intimidation would be equally futile and dangerous. Scarcely was dinner ended when Mrs. Armstrong, had she remained unacquainted with their previous proceedings, could have discovered something more than common was in agitation. Their neighbour Lucas, who was by trade a butcher, and farmed both Stockhow and a part of Salter, made his appearance, accompanied by Robinson and Willy Sinclair; and being immediately joined by her husband and his party, they left the house, and remained at some little distance, evidently engaged in deep consultation. Having seemingly agreed what course to adopt, Robinson left them, and Walter returned speedily to the house. "I hope," said he, "all will be well. Robinson is gone to keep all quiet, and as soon as it is dark Parker will be carried to some little distance, and liberated without any injury, by my uncle, who is the only person he has seen; and as he leaves us to-morrow, there is no fear of any discovery." These tidings were very acceptable to his hearers, and scarcely had Walter time to report them ere the rest of the party returned to the house, and Robin Armstrong calling for the whiskey-bottle, Mrs. Armstrong, leaving the nurse to attend to their wants, walked out, accompanied by her son and daughter.

As Walter assumed the province of guide, he imperceptibly led them to the boundary between Salter and Eskat; and as the distance to the latter was trifling, he easily persuaded his mother to inquire after the health of their good neighbours, with all of whom she was, considering her short residence in the neighbourhood, both well acquainted and regarded as a desirable acquisition to their society. They were, of course, not long in being surrounded by nearly every inhabitant in the hamlet, and in the variety of the scene and the agreeable conversation which ensued Mrs. Armstrong forgot for a while the boisterous proceedings in her own house, which she had no reason to doubt would be riotous enough, as they had remarked on their walk to Eskat two men greatly resembling Brown and Westray on the road which led to Salter, who, of course, would be both expected and welcomed by the droughthy housekeeper they had left at home.

The conversation, which had become pretty general, was not much interrupted by the entrance of Henry Clementson, who was well acquainted with all the company, if we except Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter, to whom, without seeming to expect any formal introduction, he paid the necessary compliments, as persons with whom he had some slight acquaintance. In the course of the ensuing conversation, old Ellen Anderson was mentioned by Joe Steel, as having been seen passing through the village of Arlecdon about midnight. As Henry easily divined by the arch look of his friend Joe that he entertained some suspicion of their having been seen together, which he would not neglect to introduce to the probable confusion of some of the company, he deemed it prudent to prevent any such intention by saying aloud with the most seeming indifference, "Oh! Walter, that was the old woman we saw on our walk towards the Church. What did you think of her, Miss Armstrong?" "Indeed," said Mary, "I have no wish to be acquainted with her. I was frightened at her singular appearance." "You will not be afraid of her on a further acquaintance," said Mrs. Steel, "she is perfectly harmless, if we except her idle habit of telling fortunes, by which she occasionally obliges some of her friends; and those unknown to her generally contribute something towards her support, in return for such foreknowledge as she either thinks it prudent or chooses they should be acquainted with." "But you do not really think that the old woman can possibly have any knowledge of what is to come to pass?" "I do not know what to think concerning that. I have known circumstances connected with her predictions which seemed almost miraculous." "You have known her long, then," said Mary, unwilling to drop the subject. "Pray where does she reside?" "I have known her since my childhood," resumed Mrs. Steel, "during which time she has resided in a lone and solitary house close to the mountains, where very few have chosen to visit her except in large parties during the day, as she is generally believed to be flighty, and even quite bereft of understanding at intervals. My mother knew her under very different circumstances. Her father, with whom she resided, was unfortunate, and died broken-hearted; and your grandmother, Henry, who was her friend and confidant, and whom she frequently visited while living, could, had she chosen, have told the whole story of her misfortunes. All I can tell you is, that she was betrothed to a young man of the name of Robinson, who was heir to the Scalelands estate. It was rumoured that, after an absence of some time, Robinson was seen and spoken with one evening when passing through Cleator on his journey homewards; but what, if it was the case, is extremely strange, he was never seen after; and hence probably arose the strange and idle stories respecting the Scalelands boggle. Whether it was the loss of her father, or some dreadful occurrence respecting the fate of her lover, or both united, I know not, but Ellen Anderson soon after was not like the same young woman who had been respected and beloved by all who had hitherto known her. She turned negligent of her person, regardless of her dress, chose to reside by herself, and was often met wandering alone at midnight. For your sister, Henry, as the descendant of her

friend, she seems to entertain the greatest respect; but to no one now living has she glanced at the story of her misfortunes. As to myself, I am one of the few whose future fortunes she has always evaded attempting to disclose. She foretold my marriage, and the number of my children, but would not proceed further; and therefore if Ellen be a true prophetess I have no reason to rejoice at it, for our intimacy is such that she would, I know, be as willing to tell as I could be to hear anything which could please or prove advantageous to me. I have now told you youngsters all I know concerning Ellen Anderson; and I would wish you all to be content with it, and not trouble the old woman without she herself chooses to acquaint you with what, granting it may prove true, cannot be of any service, but may possibly serve to perplex you without a reason." The whole party joined in thanking Mrs. Steel for thus satisfying their curiosity as far as she knew, and seemed to acquiesce in the propriety of her concluding remark. The conversation respecting old Ellen dropped; and Mrs. Armstrong, having augmented her party by inviting all the youngsters to accompany her home, set out on their return to Eskat.

Whatever might be the opinion of Henry's gallantry in their walk to Salter, his politeness in escorting Mrs. Armstrong, without seeming to mind the pranks of their young and volatile companions, did not admit of a question. Henry was one of those few with whom it is almost impossible to converse, even upon indifferent subjects, without being pleased. For however inflexible and tenacious of his own, his remarks upon and deference to the opinions of others were so well timed and judicious, that if any difference originally existed, the conversation seldom dropped without a final and amicable coincidence. His present more immediate companion, as we have elsewhere stated, was a well educated and sensible woman; and during a prolonged walk home, never had she been so well pleased with the knowledge and behaviour of any young man. Henry was, in fact, particularly anxious to stand well in her estimation. He knew her character, and was satisfied that the most certain passport to Mary's favour was through the good opinion of her mother; and in securing that, he so far succeeded that on their arrival at Salter Mrs. Armstrong, notwithstanding her prudence and circumspection, considered him, short as their acquaintance had been, a most desirable suitor for her daughter's favour. Her prognostications respecting the company she had left at home she found amply verified on her return. They were all, more or less, in a state of intoxication, and were laughing at the lectures of the good nurse respecting their conduct on the Sabbath, which she insisted would disgrace a brute beast, forbye men pretending to be Christians. "Hold thy tongue, nurse," said Westray; "thou art a good and a true woman, and I do not know but I may possibly make thee my own some of these days." "Learn to guide your saucy tongue, ye wicked Sabbath-breaker! Make me thy own, truly! Thinkest thou I will yoke myself to thee, thou hemp stretcher! to keep company with the beggars of Hensingham, or drive cuddies to Burslem to buy pots? Nay, marry, come up! I am not come to that neither!" To provoke the good woman, and laugh at her anger

till she absented herself from their company, was the object of the party; and Westray enjoyed and laughed at her angry retorts, as much as any of the rest. The return of the mistress of the house, with Clementson and the Eskat visitors, did not at all suit the Bacchanalians, and accordingly they soon, to the great relief of the female part of the company, withdrew to Lucas's, where they could enjoy themselves without fear of molestation.

We must now return to the helpless and disconsolate situation of Mr. Jonah Parker, who, while his indefatigable factotum was busy devising plans for discovering him, and procuring ample revenge upon Willy Sinclar, whom he firmly believed was concerned in his master's disappearance, was, though destitute of manacles, labouring under the horrors of a weary and terrific captivity. Whenever he attempted to stir, or change his position, his canine companion made the room echo with his loud and incessant growling, which was rendered more frightful by the rattling of his chain; and Jonah's fears lest he should break it made him prefer any position, however disagreeable, rather than incur the danger of being worried. The terror and agitation of his mind threw him at times into short and disturbed slumbers; and bitterly as he regretted his disgraceful confinement, which he knew would be full often thrown in his face upon future occasions, he was not the less resolved, whatever promises his liberation might cost him, to give his ensnarers the utmost visitation the law would afford, as on cool reflection he remembered the horse to be Lucas's and the voice which had named Sinclar, during his obscure journey to his present abode, he was almost certain was that of his own man, Jacob Johnston, who had been out all night with him, and whom, as the morning advanced, he had dispatched to reconnoitre the premises of Robinson on his return home. Should that prove to be the case, he considered the conviction of Willy and his associate as certain; and could he but procure ample revenge for the outrage, he very prudently resolved to let his estate, and keep out of their clutches in future. The decline of day, which was easily perceptible through the coarse canvas in which he was enveloped, was, however pleasing as the harbinger which proclaimed the near approach of freedom, not entirely destitute of many disagreeable sensations. He could not tell whether his disclosures would prove satisfactory to his formidable gaoler, but, as far as promises would go, he determined to stick at nothing; although he felt some reluctance to disclose the name of his informer, whose story he was satisfied was correct, if he had not being thwarted by unforeseen and adverse circumstances. Amidst this chaos of suspense and conjecture he heard the door open and the peg removed; and immediately a voice which he instantly recollected to be the same he had before so unwillingly listened to, thus addressed him: "Jonah Parker, thou perceivest I have hitherto kept my word with thee; and I will in a short time relieve thee from thy bondage, if thou dost truly answer my question. From whom didst thou receive that information which induced thee to keep watch upon the premises of thy neighbours?" "I do not think it right to inform you that," replied Jonah, "but I will give you other information you require of me, albeit it is but just you

should produce the warrant of our lord the King to oblige an Englishman to answer such unbecoming questions; and that, too, only in cases—"Tell me not of cases," interrupted his impatient catechiser, "I have warrant enough to make thee answer me by fair means, and if foul ones are resorted to, whose will be the fault, for I give thee thy free option?" Jonah remained silent for some time, and he could preceive his seeming resolution not to satisfy them puzzled them not a little. His terror, however, was extreme, when after a confused suppression of voices, he could distinguish an audible whisper of "It will not do, I tell you! He will not answer truly, and his lies and malice may cause mischief; therefore either tuck him up where he is, or throw him into the river, and then we are clear of him once for all." Those terrible words were answered by "Well, well, as you think best. I am clear of my promise, as he has evidently shuffled; therefore, Dick, make a proper noose, while I throw the other end of that cord over the beam. Jonah Parker, thy time is numbered. Thou hast neglected the opportunity of preserving thy life, and therefore prepare thyself for death, with all speed, for thy time is of the shortest." This intimation, followed by the lash of a rope against the beam above him, had such an effect upon the captive, that he had in right good earnest nearly disappointed them of profiting by his disclosures. The idea of such a death was so terrible to Jonah Parker, that his tongue for some time refused its office; and his agitation of mind and body was visible through the covering which inclosed him. "Shall we hang him up in the sack, or let him die like his brother rogues?" said an unknown voice, in a kind of whisper. "In the sack by all means," answered another, "for then it will serve him for a shroud, and we can bury him without further trouble."

Jonah Parker had not, though naturally timid, apprehended any very serious consequences, previous to the arrival of his gaolers; and the sounds of a human voice, however rough, as long as it conveyed no intimation of immediate danger, rather allayed than increased the anxiety of his mind. Therefore, when he first heard a resolute determination to silence him for ever, by the committal of a cold-blooded and horrible murder, the shock was so terrible to his feelings as to deprive him of utterance; but like a temporary detention of a stream of water, his faculty of speech quickly returned with double energy. "As ye hope for mercy from above," said he, "send not the soul of a fellow sinner to its final and terrible account, totally unprepared; but spare my life, and spare yourselves the certainty of eternal damnation, by the premeditated perpetration of so foul and diabolical a murder. Think, I beseech you, of that moment when this world is as near receding from your view, and an awful eternity presenting itself, as it can be to me at this time. And if you are deaf to all fears of futurity, reflect on the punishment you will assuredly meet in this world from the avenging laws of your country; for when did the actors of so open a deed escape detection? Whatever ye require of me which can be of service to you, I am ready to answer." Jonah Parker had touched the right key to procure his liberation. The frank and manly heart of Richie Foster, though it might have

been proof against any unmanly supplication for mercy, was entirely devoid of that callous inhumanity and apathetical indifference to all social and sacred institutions, which alone could resist so powerful an appeal to the feelings, was instantly touched. The solemn and eloquent tone of voice in which Parker addressed them, and the awful and irresistible truth of the arguments he advanced, at once carried conviction to the mind of Richie, and made him ashamed of the mean part he had acted. This, while it marred every scheme of his companions to frighten and perplex their victim any longer, made him truly solicitous to put an end to this farcical and disgraceful interview, and he cried with some impatience, "Prithee, tell us at once who told thee, or by what means thou gained a knowledge of last night's transactions, and let us have done with the nonsense. Speak the truth and fear not; and it will be thy own fault if thou art not in thy own house in one hour from this time." Parker now deemed further evasion as unnecessary as it was dangerous. He acquainted them in a few words that the losses he had suffered from Lucas and Robinson made him desirous to be even with them, that he had thrown himself in Nixon's way, in Whitehaven, and attempted to bribe him, but that Nixon, after some hesitation, refused his offer. That having gained information that Nixon lodged with a woman with whom he was supposed to cohabit, he had gone to her, and by dint of a little money, and ample promises of more if the information was correct, she had told him when the brandy was to be removed, and where it was to be deposited; but Nixon either could not, or would not give information, and knew nothing further about it. After this disclosure, Parker could distinguish voices in evident contention. But this lasted not long; his Herculean kidnapper came up to him in evident wrath with his companions. "Jonah Parker," said he, "I will play this game no longer for any man's fancy. Thy answers are satisfactory to me, and I will redeem my promises to thee accordingly. Any remonstrances as to the precautions I deem necessary for setting thee at liberty will only delay the time; therefore, silence and submission will suit thee best." He then lifted Jonah upon his feet and loosed the sack; but immediately bandaging his eyes with a handkerchief, and taking him in his arms as if he had been an infant, he ran down the steps, and placing him upon the ground, seized his arm, and ordering him to move on, walked forward with a steady pace, Jonah could form no idea of the road they travelled; he could only conjecture that they made many twines and went over different kinds of road. At length his guide suddenly stopped, untied the bandage, and thus addressed him, "Thou art now at liberty, for which thou art somewhat indebted to me, which may perhaps soften the part I took in first detaining thee. Farewell; and if thou art wise, keep thyself clear of such proceedings in future." He then removed the handkerchief, leapt the hedge, and disappeared in an instant.

The first thing Jonah Parker had to reflect upon after his liberation was to endeavour to ascertain the place where he stood, and this he was not long in doing. The night was neither dark nor far advanced, and to his great joy he found himself within a trifling distance

of Ennerdale Bridge. The door of the inn was closed, but there wanted not customers within; and Jonah, lurking beside the window, was a greedy listener to his supposed captivity, to the scene in the church-yard, and to the divers schemes which his trust-worthy friend Jacob had suggested for his discovery and relief. Jonah did not think proper to make his first appearance in such company, and was not long in reaching his own house, which he found locked up, and completely deserted; but on approaching the dwelling of Jacob Johnstone, he was welcomed as well by that faithful rustic and his wife as by the whole of his own family, all of whom rejoiced to see him once more in safety.

At the period we treat of, tea, though its introduction was general throughout the kingdom, was a beverage by no means common in the remote parts of this county, where it was considered more as a novelty than anything like a luxury. In reality, there are instances which are too well authenticated to admit of any doubt, that it was purchased by some so ignorant of the manner of using it, that it was frequently boiled in a pan, kettles not being then deemed so indispensable a household utensil, and after carefully draining off the liquid, the leaves were chopped with butter, and served up exactly similar to what is called a common herb-pudding. Mrs. Armstrong, we will suppose, was too accomplished a housewife to be unacquainted with the proper method of preparing, or what our ladies of the present day deem a more proper and polished phrase, making it; and therefore we may venture to conclude that her young party drank that afternoon what we would now call a comfortable cup of tea. Youth is not the season of voluntary confinement. The evening was delightful, and lacking neither health nor spirits, the sprightly youngsters leaving the mistress of the mansion and the good nurse to arrange their necessary domestic concerns, set out to enjoy themselves by rambling, without any definite purpose, in pairs, or in mingled confusion, as chance or the caprice of the moment dictated.

Having finished their business within the house, Mrs. Armstrong and the nurse closed the door, and walked out to see if they could trace the route or discover any indication of the return of the young party. Their walk was unwillingly prolonged to a considerable distance by the interest they took in the subject of their conversation, which was, indeed, one always esteemed by both as intimately blended with their own happiness—the welfare of Mary. The object of Henry Clementson's visit, as it was too apparent to admit of any doubt, was, of course, the immediate cause of serious consideration. Notwithstanding the general freedom of his behaviour, which appeared quite indifferent as far as regarded any selection in his choice of company, the anxious mother had remarked that when his eyes met those of her daughter, there was in them that mixture of expressive meaning and confused tenderness which clearly indicated that the feelings of his heart were deeply interested in those glances, which, as they convey the meaning, are the most lively and unequivocal testimonies of the indissoluble spirit within. The resolute and ardent character of Henry would, it was quite certain, excite him to the pursuit of his inclinations in spite of any obstacles which could

be thrown in his way, except his declarations met with a decided negative from Mary herself, and this was not very probable. Mary's affections were, so far as she knew previous to her meeting with Henry, quite unengaged; and independently of her hasty expression after the scuffle, she had remarked, that during the afternoon there appeared to her something more than accident in the crimson which flushed over the cheeks of Mary when she had more than once caught her eyes, as they followed the movements of Henry, or glanced on his countenance as he spoke. All these observations she made no hesitation in disclosing to the well-meaning nurse; nor did she scruple to express the high opinion she had herself formed of Henry during their very slight acquaintance. Henry's connexions, she knew, were very respectable; and she had heard that he was master of a sum of money sufficient to enable him to commence some business, with a reasonable prospect of making his way in the world. This, though by no means equal in a lucrative point of view to what Mary had already refused, or what might possibly again be offered to her acceptance, could not furnish any reasonable objection to his alliance, as Mary neither had, or was likely to possess, any fortune whatever; but what to her was a real source of uneasiness was, that the pride of Henry might revolt at a legal connexion with the daughter of a smuggler; and could he gain the affections of Mary, he might, rather than balk his inclinations, have formed a design of seducing her. In answer to these objections, Henry had a strong advocate in the nurse. He was, she said, too frank and too brave a laddie to harbour any such mean and dishonest views. Love was too great a leveller of any such frivolous objections as she could urge in the present case. Nobody had a right, nor would Henry suffer any person to thwart his inclinations. Mary's prudence she doubted not, was equal to her beauty; and to awaken any unfounded suspicions of her lover's intentions was not only cruel, but might tend to crush their mutual confidence in the very bud, and thereby render two young people unhappy, without any cause whatever. It was therefore her advice to keep such vigilant watch upon the progress of their acquaintance as a mother's reasonable discretion fully warranted, and leave the rest to Providence. Whatever old or very prudent people might think, youthful affection was not to be restricted or bartered like the sale or purchase of their stock; and whenever it was the case, it was always productive of a life of misery to both parties. It was therefore her settled opinion that Mary should be left to her own option, or otherwise, like many lasses, she might be tempted to commit some imprudent action which they might have reason to regret, without having the power to prevent the unavoidable consequences which might attend it.

This long and important discussion had led them to a much greater distance than they had anticipated; and in returning they incurred a danger which had well nigh been attended with the most serious and dreadful consequences. Salter was then, as now, divided into separate estates, and one of these Tom Lucas farmed in conjunction with Stockhow. The inequality of the ground, and the abundance of wood in that neighbourhood, have, as in similar situations, been considered

a means of rendering cattle wild and dangerous. Tom Lucas always kept one or more bulls; and these rendered savage by their mutual bellowings, or the echo of their own terrific moanings, were not very desirable company to foregather with, even for the boldest and most active youths, except fully prepared for the encounter by the assistance of their curs, of which the most furious of these animals have a much greater dread when accustomed to them, than of the most formidable mastiff. The circumstance of a bull turning what is termed man-keen, was to Lucas rather a recommendation than a disqualification. It kept unwelcome stragglers out of his ground, and being a butcher, farmer, and grazier, he had always men and dogs about his premises to bring them when wanted, or keep them in sufficient awe for his purpose, without the female or weaker part of his family incurring any danger on that account, as knowing their pastures, they had nothing to do but keep out of their reach. The bull then kept by Lucas was unusually large and savage, and he was commonly depastured in Thistlegill, for the purpose of rendering that *sanctum sanctorum* dangerous to prying intruders; but being that afternoon wanted near the house, he had been forced away by the dogs, while those who had encouraged them on were too idle to notice the direction he took to clear himself of them. He had therefore swerved from the direct path, and, regardless of trifling obstacles, forced himself into one of Armstrong's fields, where his canine tormentors quitting him, he had for some time sheltered in, and Mrs. Armstrong and the nurse, unconscious of any danger, were crossing the field on their return home, till rendered fully sensible of their hazardous situation, by one of those appalling moans, which at once indicate the presence and rising fury of these gigantic savages. The frightened females were, however, at a sufficient distance from him when he first perceived them to reach and secure a gate which led into another field adjoining the buildings before he could overtake them; for rendered more furious both by their flight and the previous usage he had undergone, he lost no time in pursuing them, making the surrounding valleys ring with his dreadful roarings. The gate formed but a feeble barrier to his progress, for placing his horns underneath it, he threw it over his head in a moment, and by that means arrived so near his intended victims, that, advanced in years as they were, their exertions to get out of his reach were evidently fruitless; and it appeared certain that one or both of them must fall a prey to his unrestrained fury. Most fortunately, Henry Clementson and Mary had separated from the rest of the company, and had preceded them home, on Mary's urging the lonely situation in which she had left her mother and nurse, when their screams, and the terrific noise which marked the near approach of their vindictive pursuer, roused their attention. They had reached the house and ascertained that it was tenantless, when Henry was diverted from a softer theme by Mary's breathless exclamation of "Good God, my dear mother!" which made him instantly quit the dwelling; and crossing the yard in the direction of the noise, the cause of their alarm, and the danger of the two helpless women, were alike visible. On leaving the house, Henry had snatched a strong oaken sapling which luckily stood amongst

some others behind the door, and though impelled alike by his humanity and the necessity for immediate succour, it required his utmost exertions to make his assistance fully effectual; for the enraged beast had nearly overtaken, and was preparing to make a decisive rush upon his victims, who, palsied by terror, clung to each other, and awaited a fate which seemed so inevitable and dreadful, when the shouts of Henry, and his arrival at the place, diverted him from the former objects of his fury. The furious animal paused for a moment in the midst of his career, and Henry, advancing somewhat nearer to him in an oblique direction, and attracting his attention by provoking his rage with menacing voice and gestures, the bull, with an hideous yell, rushed directly at him. Henry, with equal agility and presence of mind, threw his hat in the animal's face, and stepping nimbly aside, not only evaded his fury, but before he could turn himself, seized a firm hold of his tail, and commenced plying his cudgel with much force and effect. The bull several times attempted to wheel round upon his assailant, but his attempts were always met by a shower of blows upon his eyes, nose, and horns; till losing his courage from his ineffectual attempts at revenge, he decamped from the scene of action with the utmost speed. His endeavours to escape further punishment were for some time as impotent as unavailing. Henry easily kept pace with him, belabouring him all the while, till as terrified himself as he ever had made others, he rushed headlong into a thicket, when his assailant was constrained to quit his hold, and desist from his pursuit. The nurse was so much affected by the danger she had almost miraculously escaped, that on Mary's arrival (whose fears for her mother had made her hasten to them even before the defeat and flight of the bull) she swooned away; and the situation of the nurse, joined to greater firmness of mind, alone prevented Mrs. Armstrong from following the example. This temporary deprivation of her faculties was but transient; and some time before Henry joined them, she had fully recovered, and joined in the pious and most becoming ejaculation in which Mrs. Armstrong had returned thanks to their Creator for their rescue. On Henry's return, there was in his manner and appearance the consciousness of having performed a meritorious action, joined to the desire of making it appear as light and trifling to those benefitted by it as possible, and he was the first that broke silence. "I have," said he, "given yonder cowardly beast such a lesson for his insolence as will make him remember both me and this good cudgel for some time to come! But really, Mary, I am almost tempted to think you must have had some presentiment of your mother's danger, for you see we only arrived just in time to avert it." "Do not," said Mrs. Armstrong, "so undervalue the service you have rendered us. How few are there who possess either the courage or generosity to have acted as you have done; and fewer still who are blessed with the power or promptness of action to have made their assistance of any avail. But I see and respect your motive too much to distress you; my services, whenever they can avail you, will best speak the grateful sense I will always retain for the preservation of my life, and may my prayers to the Fountain of all Goodness in your behalf, not fall like the chaff which the wind

scattereth, till it is no more seen.' But come, let us hasten home, and see if the rest of the party be returned in safety." And, supported by the arm of their preserver, the two senior women soon reached the house ; while Mary followed, deeply impressed with anxiety for the danger of her mother, gratitude for her preservation, and, it would not exceed truth if we were to add, love for the immediate occasion of it.

Previous to the arrival of Walter and his party at the dwelling of his father, they were fully acquainted with the danger his mother and the old nurse had providentially escaped. One of Lucas's servants, who resided at Salter, had heard the noise, and witnessed the conflict between Clementson and her master's bull, and was as eager to promulgate the circumstance, remodelled with some particulars of her own, as any gossip of modern times. The sensations of Walter on learning the extent of the danger are difficult to describe. Affection for his mother and gratitude for her deliverer struggled for pre-eminence. He rushed into the apartment where the small party were seated ; and the pleasure of seeing them safe, contrasted with what they might have been, instantaneously crossing his recollection, the mingled emotions of his mind quite overpowered him, and he burst into tears. The perturbation of his spirits being somewhat soothed by this relief, he congratulated his mother in the most feeling and affectionate manner on her escape ; and turning to Henry, observed, "That if her preservation had rested with any other person, he was convinced it would have been unavailing ; that however ready he himself might have been to have attempted so perilous a rescue, it was probable it would have proved fruitless, but that if"—Henry would not suffer him to proceed. He assured him, "that even upon a calm review of the circumstances, he considered the danger he had incurred was so trifling that he would most assuredly have hazarded it in behalf of any human being, however worthless or unknown to him, or even to relieve or preserve any creature or object to which he attached any value ; and that, on this particular occasion, if he had not exerted the power with which he was endowed, or been dilatory in affording his assistance, his own remorse would have been equal to the sorrow of any other individual ; and that, therefore, as he had been as much swayed by his own feelings as his regard for others, his claim to any thanks as having conferred an obligation was comparatively trivial ; and on that account, if any were due to him, he would, as far as regarded himself, consider them most amply bestowed by not mentioning them." The return of the rest of the party prevented Walter's replying ; and as the recent transaction was the unavoidable theme of conversation, Henry extorted the laughter of the more giddy part of the company, and the smiles of the most serious, by ludicrously detailing the embarrassing situation of the bull when he had him entangled by the tail, the speed he had exerted in his flight, and the great terror he manifested by the manner in which he completed his escape, and concluded by offering to bet a trifle that the said beast, would for some time recollect the very instrument of his chastisement so well, that if it was laid in his way he would shun it just as much as a wise man would a pestilence.

The danger his wife had incurred, and the manner of her escape, was soon imparted to Robin Armstrong, who with his drunken associates were just then deliberating upon the captivity of Jonah Parker. The story somewhat affected him on its first recital, but as soon as he was certain of her safety, the transaction was commented upon in so many different points of view by his companions, that, in his present state, the impression it had made upon him was soon obliterated. Richie Foster, after observing in his blunt and open manner that her rescue was a bold and gallant action, turned to Lucas, and asked him why he kept so vicious and dangerous a beast. Lucas defended his conduct by urging the service the animal had been of to the whole concern, as the terror with which he was regarded kept that part of his ground more free from intruders of every description than if he had hired men to watch it. It was, he alleged, the only effectual way to prevent any discovery, whether designed or accidental as guarding the vicinity of the vault by any other means would only occasion suspicion. These reasons were deemed so sufficiently plausible by the whole company as to excuse Lucas, who expressed his determination to keep the beast; but he promised Robin Armstrong that he would never suffer him to be removed from his accustomed pasture without taking care that he should never, either on his removal or return, trespass in a similar manner. This being satisfactorily arranged, and the evening pretty far advanced, the whole party set off for Robinson's, of Long Moor, the place where Parker was confined, devising the most plausible methods during their journey to intimidate him into such confessions as might be of service to them; and it was solely owing to Richie Foster's powerful interference in his favour, that Parker was liberated without enduring some further marks of their resentment. That, however, being agreed upon, and effected as we have already related, the remaining part of the night was consumed in drinking and debating upon their future proceedings, and it was not till day was beginning to peep that they separated to recruit themselves from the toil of the succeeding night.

In the meantime, the youthful visitors of Mrs. Armstrong passed the early part of the evening in that social and agreeable manner which was consistent with the regular practice and customs of that period. Blind-man's buff, and the game of forfeits, now nearly extinct in many parts of Cumberland, were then in great repute in this neighbourhood. The first of these is well enough calculated for the promotion of boisterous and rompish mirth; and was therefore more a favourite with the giddy and volatile rustics than the other, which required much more intellect to render it amusing. The eyes of one of the party were bound close with a handkerchief, and being led to the boundary allowed for the sport, it was his business to catch, detain, and mention the name of the party caught, in which, if he succeeded, they immediately exchanged situations; but if he erred in respect to the person, he was convinced of his mistake by the voice of the captive in some doggerel rhymes adapted for the occasion, which are yet common to almost every child in the vicinity.

In the game of forfeits, each person deposited some distinguishing trifle, to which they were supposed to attach a corresponding value,

into a hat, or some similar depository; and one of the company, on whose ingenuity the interest of the game in a great measure depended, kneeled down, and having his head covered with a napkin, or apron, another selected one of the deposits, of which the person kneeling had no certain knowledge except what was gained by a few simple queries, the tendency of which enabled him to ascertain whether it belonged to a youth or a maiden. The querist concluded by demanding, "What munn them de at ons't?" Some penalty was then attached to the restoration of the deposit, which was generally of the ludicrous kind; but any indecorous solution was prevented, as well by the general voice of the company, as by the uncertainty of the person who awarded the penalty with respect to the owner of the particular deposit, which, of course, might have proved to have been his own. I have been somewhat induced to give publicity to this nonsense, because these games, there is reason to believe, were practised by the Egyptians, and introduced by their posterity into all countries, where they obtained a footing, though varied, perhaps, in some trifling particulars, probably with a sinister view of assisting those oracular dispensations which were a principal means of supporting these wandering vagabonds.

Of this manner of spending a Sabbath evening, I shall not make many observations. Some readers will think it profligate and sinful in the highest degree; while others, considering it entirely devoid of any intentional offence, will consider it as innocent and amusing. It is a proposition generally assented to, that "Where much is given, much will be required," and judging of these amusements by the intentions of those who practise, or rather practised them, before religion was so rigidly meted out by the increased methodistical or evangelical standard, we may venture to suppose that the comparative blindness of those days may plead in extenuation of the offence, if such it is designated; but if, at this enlightened era, any of my rustic readers venture to pursue them at such a time in future, at their own peril be it. I can only recommend to their due consideration a well known portion of Pope's universal prayer:—

"What conscience dictates to be done," &c.

On the departure of the young party for Eskat, Walter and his sister were bound in decency to accompany them part of the road; and as Walter chose to extend his escort to the place itself, it was equally incumbent upon Henry to see Mary safe back again. On their return, Mrs. Armstrong, guided by the suggestions of the nurse, and overpowered by the events of the day and preceding night, chose to retire, after expressing a hope of Walter's speedy return. In fact, what other course could she pursue? The services Henry had before rendered her husband had now been augmented by her own personal preservation; and as the intention of his visits were too natural, and too manifest to admit of any dubious construction, she could not, under such circumstances, with any propriety forbid them; and to throw any unusual obstacles in the prospect of his success, was neither generous nor candid. Mary was therefore left to the guidance of her own discretion, and no doubt acted as prudently as the

most modest of my fair readers would have done in her situation. Henry pleaded his cause, not only with the eloquence, but with the intentional sincerity of a true lover, and met with all the success he could reasonably desire. Before his departure he received a promise of mutual fidelity, which is, under such circumstances, tantamount to an acknowledgment of mutual affection. And thus, by a long chain of coincidences, which seem more like the consequence of preordination than the effects of chance, did Henry Clementson become the professed and accepted lover of Mary Armstrong.

In the course of the ensuing week, Henry was surprised one morning by the appearance of Willy Sinclair, who, watching his opportunity, slipped a letter into his hand, unperceived by his sister or brother-in-law. The letter was from Walter; and briefly informed him that Parker had, on the strength of his own conjectures, and the corroboration of some parts of his story by the oath of Jacob Johnstone, procured warrants for Lucas, Robinson, and Willy Sinclair, which charged them with a conspiracy for seizing and detaining his person, for the purpose of obtaining from him, under penalty of his life, certain unjustifiable information respecting their illegal transactions. That to his great surprise, no information, as far as he could learn, had been laid against his uncle, which might probably be owing to the part he took in his release; and that, as the three persons actually accused judged the evidence he could truly give might be of service to them, they had desired him to write, and request the favour of his accompanying them to Mr. Justice Plainway's, who had granted the warrants, and before whom they were to appear that same afternoon. Willy further informed him, that if he consented to accompany them they would call upon or meet him soon after dinner, as three o'clock was the hour appointed by the Justice for their appearance. Henry having signified his acquiescence, and their meeting being arranged accordingly, Sinclair departed in high glee, slyly observing, that "Jonah Parker would be as sick of his warrants, as of his confinement in the sack."

At the appointed time, the parties specified called upon Henry, who, without any delay, accompanied them to the residence of Mr. Justice Plainway, which was very desirably situated about three miles from Whitehaven, on the eastern border of the rivulet Keekle. The house stands at the head of a rich and nearly level piece of ground which from the gradual rise to the East and West assumes the appearance of a fine open valley, which gradually contracts to the southward, but to the north, extends to such a distance on the eastern angle as to forfeit all pretensions to the name. The mansion is, in point of prospect, perhaps the finest in the vicinity of Whitehaven. The immediate view to the front overlooks the valley, and the Keekle forms a prominent shade in the scenery, not only by serpentizing along the level, but by giving name to the mansion itself, as well as some antique remains of the former residence of the family, which stand on the opposite banks of the rivulet, and are now nearly surrounded and enveloped with wood; while at a greater distance the view is so diversified by the contraction of the valley, which immediately opens again to an immense extent, and presents such a variety

of rural scenery partially shaded by the superfluity of trees, the foliage of which, darkening as the distance increases, in some measure compels the eye to seek a resting-place in the boundless expanse of clouds beyond them. Nor is the strong contrast visible at a short distance from the north side of the house anything inferior. The boundaries of the comparatively level common upon which it at that time opened was, during the summer, agreeably interspersed and rendered fragrant by the variety of those pleasing and richly-scented blossoms from which the industrious bee selects some of its choicest stores; while directly forward, the high bleak sides of Weddicar form a range with the still colder and bleaker heights of Whillymoor. The view is changed to the right by the small and deep vale which separates them from the borders of Frizington and Arlecdon, and includes the village of the latter parish; while to the east, the blue or verdant summits of the mountains of Cleator, Kinniside, Ennerdale, and Lamplugh are overlooked by the fells of Loweswater and the clouds which canopy the whole.

The owner of these premises, who was then in the decline of life, was a tall, dark-looking man, somewhat inclined to corpulency, and by no means fond of his magisterial duties; and though extremely plain, and even blunt in his manners and conversation, he was not without a large share of family pride. His walls were decorated with the portraits of a long list of ancestors, several of whom had in different capacities been enrolled in the service of their country, and had in their latter years been vested with that civil distinction of which he himself was a member. Jonah Parker had often plagued Mr. Plainway with those trifling disputes which characterized his residence in the neighbourhood; and the Justice hated him most heartily, as well for the trouble he gave him, as for that prim formality of speech, so directly contrary to his own open and blunt manner of delivery.

Not long previous to this transaction, Mr. Parker had met with a most severe rebuke from the Justice. One of his most frequent and fruitful sources of contention with his neighbours was a difference of opinion relative to the treatment of the poor; and so pertinaciously did he adhere to his own opinion upon the occasion alluded to, that the overseers had been actually forced to distrain upon his property for the sum due to them, as collectors of a rate which had been duly sanctioned by the magistrates. To complain of this rate, and of the manner of its distribution, Parker had waited upon Mr. Plainway, and pestered him so much by his formal and niggardly quibbling, that the Justice, who, notwithstanding his bluntness, was a very humane and charitable man, lost all his small quantum of patience. "Hark thee, Parker!" said he, "Prithee how much land hast thou altogether?" "I have, if it please your worship, forty-seven acres, two roods, and nineteen, and nearly one half perches, in fair and regular admeasurement; beside," "Whew! Then, d—n thee, be off! Get it all sown with hemp, hang all that can't maintain themselves, and then they will hardly trouble thee much longer!" and instantly turning away, he left Parker before he could recover from his astonishment.

The approach of the opposite parties to the edifice of justice, was directly contrary to what is usually observed in the conduct of the accuser and the accused. Lucas was not unacquainted with Mr. Plainway, either in the latter's capacity as a magistrate, or on account of his own extensive and separate concerns as a butcher and farmer, nor even in his more dangerous occupation as a dealer in brandy, and as Lucas was one of those who are extremely provident in endeavouring to stand well with their superiors, on the supposition of future services, the Justice had good reason to be satisfied in all his transactions with Tom Lucas, who, with his associates, appeared quite certain of exonerating himself from any charge Jonah Parker could bring against him. Jonah, on the other hand, was conscious he was no favourite with the Justice; but as he was the nearest magistrate, and chose to be at home, there was no alternative; for standing on no better terms with any other in the neighbourhood, he knew the very first question would refer to the legality of his application. These fears he had imparted to his companion, and therefore when they were summoned into the presence of Mr. Justice Plainway, and a brother magistrate whom he had invited to dinner, purposely to assist him on this occasion, the confidence of their opponents, was further increased by the evident trepidation of their antagonist; while his more steady associate, however momentarily abashed at his first entry into such a magnificent abode, when compared to any other dwelling he had ever previously witnessed, was, nevertheless, as confident in the justice of their cause as resolute in upholding every tittle of his former evidence. The apartment in which Mr. Plainway usually transacted his magisterial business was the one rendered most impressive by the portraits of those illustrious personages that graced the walls; which being painted in the size and dress peculiar to the times in which they had lived, and the costume of the several professions to which they had belonged, were well calculated to strike the simple rustics who viewed them for the first time with some additional awe. In two goodly chairs placed at the head of a large square mahogany table slightly decorated with paper of more professional show than substance, sat the Justices; and as soon as he had ushered the respective parties into the apartment, appeared the hard-featured visage and athletic form of James Clark, who might truly be called a useful man of business, for he acted in the several stations of gardener, husbandman, barber, clerk, and constable, in the employ of Mr. Plainway, in which last capacity he had served the warrants, and, agreeably to his instructions, arranged the time of meeting with the interested parties. He now, with becoming gravity, took his seat at the lower end of the table, ready to put down in black and white the examination of the different delinquents, or the witnesses produced for or against them.

The necessary formalities being completed, Mr. Justice Plainway was not long in proceeding to business. He was on this occasion in one of his very best humours. The captivity of his teasing acquaintance Jonah had mightily tickled his fancy; and scarcely could he preserve the requisite gravity of countenance, befitting his situation, as he proceeded. "Hear you, Tom Lucas! what have

you to say to this charge against you? I think friend Barclay we must question them separately. Harkye, James! Mind you write down the answers to my questions." An assenting nod being given by the two persons alluded to, Lucas asked what he was accused of? "Accused of! Why, man, stealing! kidnapping! bundling poor Parker, there, into a sack, and galloping off with him as if he had been a cask of brandy! Did he not, Parker?" Jonah Parker liked not this method of proceeding. He saw clearly that his interrogator would enjoy the recapitulation of his captivity, and began to imagine that it would have saved him much mortification, if he had suffered the circumstance to have passed over quietly. A compliance with Mr. Plainway's desire was, however, rendered inevitable, as Mr. Barclay, who was a gentleman much respected, and whose manners and conversation were entirely destitute of those homely traits and coarse innuendos which, if they do not detract from the sterling worth of the man, always degrade the important duties of the magistrate, desired him to recount the charges against the three persons whose names were included in the warrants, as he himself was very imperfectly acquainted with the merits of the case. Parker accordingly related with great minuteness all that had befallen him from his leaving the officer and his party to return home; adding, that he could safely swear to the suppressed voices of Sinclair, Robinson, and Lucas; and seemed disposed to dwell upon the reasons he had for suspecting Lucas and Robinson as accessaries to Sinclair, whom Jacob Johnstone would positively swear to. "Mr. Parker," said Barclay, "you must yourself be aware of the inefficacy, if not the inaccuracy of the greatest part of your accusation. The only person you actually saw, and whom you are satisfied was the only person that laid hands upon you, is not included in the warrant; and any charge you can bring against two of these men amounts to mere matter of suspicion, upon which you cannot ground any reason for further proceeding; for granting you choose to swear to their voices, such an oath, under such circumstances, would, unsupported by any other evidence, be of no service to you. Your charge against Sinclair, as far as regards your own evidence, is nearly in the same predicament; but if Jacob Johnstone will swear to the person of Sinclair, it is quite another business: and as seizing the person of any man without due sanction of the law, is in itself as flagrant and unjustifiable as the language affecting your life was most villainous and atrocious, he shall, upon reasonable proof of his aiding and assisting therein, be committed without fail. Therefore, you, Jacob Johnstone, come forward. Where, how, and when, did you see Sinclair proceeding in the manner you have sworn?" Jacob detailed, in his own natural lingo, how he had been detained to watch the premises of Robinson; and that finding nothing to occasion any suspicion, he was proceeding homewards, when he met the said Sinclair riding in the manner before related. That Sinclair did not speak to him; which silence was amply amended by his companion, who threatened, and pursued him; concluding by offering "To tak' his Bible oath befoure outhur Judge or Jury," to the truth of his deposition. "How's that, Willy?" said Mr. Plainway, who had no desire to see matters go

further without his interference, "what sayest thou, lad? art thou guilty, or not guilty? Thou hearest what Jacob Johnstone deposes against thee." "Aye, aye," answered Willy, who knew how to twist a story, and assume a language and manner for his own advantage, as well as any rustic in Cumberland, "I hear that, sure enough. But dearee me, your Worships! who minds what Jacob Johnstone says! He is hand and glove with his bloody minded master more ways than one, and abused me like a tinkler on the Lord's day, even within five yards of the Church door! No, no! my master there can prove what your Worships call an alibi; and so can Henry Clementson, who saw me in quite another place, even after this same Mr. Jacob, and his master, and their gang, attempted to murder him! and for matter of that your Worships may ask him to swear if he either saw me touch or speak to Mr. Parker on that day! or even if he saw or heard him at all! And moreover I would like to know what right Jacob Johnstone has to be a spy, or maybe a thief, on Mr. Robinson's premises, without authority or leave given, when he should be in his bed! But there be who say, that Mr. Parker is ready enough to send him a fool's errand, when may be he himself is not building churches, though he may be fur nishing materials for an altar." These observations were accompanied with a sneering laugh by his associates, as Willy, with an arch look, under pretence of scratching his head, closed his thumbs upon his temples, and stretched out his fingers in a curved position. "Hey day," said Mr. Plainway, "what the devil's all this, Will? I scarcely know what thou art driving at. One thing at a time, lad! one thing at a time! But Harry Clementson, prithee tell us thy errand? And Heaven send it may help us to understand some of Willy's phraseology! We hope Parker did not positively intend to murder thee, to hinder Willy of the benefit of thy evidence, which is to prove him in another place." Henry in a few words related the behaviour of the soldiers, of whom Parker seemed to have the direction; and stated, that after the morning had broken, he could, and would if necessary, swear that he saw Sinclair in another place, and even travelling in a different direction from that where Jacob Johnstone stated to have seen him: but added, that he did not blame Mr. Parker for the brutal behaviour of his party; and as for the dispute with Lucas, he was not present, but he understood Lucas meant to bind that gentleman over, to oblige him to keep the peace towards him. "Is that true, Tom," cried the Justice, "or is Harry making game of thee?" "Nay," said Lucas, "there is no joking about the business. I did but tell the officer of the confidence I had in neighbour there, and he openly challenged me to fight him with pistols. This the officer himself can, will, and shall testify. I am a peaceable, and honest man, as your Worships' self may judge; and I do not like a gang of dirty blackguards prowling about my house; for if such proceedings are to be suffered, no man's life or property can be considered safe for a moment. As for Willy Sinclair, I will swear I saw both him and my own horse both before and after Mr. Parker left his company with me; nor have I ever seen him till in your Worships' presence since he talked of pistoling me; and I think if he was run away with, it was much likelier to be by some of his own gang

or lack of other payment, than any of us, to whom he is of no more use than two pair of horns would be to a bell weather!" "True, Tom! thou sayest true," said the Justice; who, however, did not understand those allusions which appeared to silence and confound the parties for whom they were meant, as neither of them felt anxious for a further explanation. "I tell thee Parker there is little credit in these midnight excursions of thine! and as for the duelling, that thou knowest is quite contrary to law; and if Lucas insists upon the point, thou must find ample bail to keep the peace. But as ye are neighbours all, I think all of ye will be better pleased if you agree to shake hands, forget and forgive, and so drop the business altogether. What think you, Mr. Barclay?" "Why really Mr. Parker," said the gentleman alluded to, "I do not think your conduct in this affair very commendable and at any rate, I think without you can give further evidence, or confute that which is likely to be produced in behalf of Sinclair, you will have very slender chance of success. Whereas, if you agree to a general quittance, it may probably make you better neighbours in future; and in that case I presume Lucas will not press your Quixotic proposal to him any further." "Well your Worship," said Lucas, "as you have said the word, Tom Lucas will not gainsay it;—therefore Mr. Parker, speak the word, and it shall be just as you please." "Truly," replied Jonah, "as there seems to be a variety of circumstances which seem to counteract the effect of Jacob's evidence, and in case of proceeding, my own it appears will not be taken, I must perforce suspend further procedure at this time. Master Henry Clementson's story is doubtless correct, and I do acquit him of all intention of giving false evidence; but for Tom Lucas's, I will say that the proverbs are verified as far as regardeth him, and others. 'Birds of a feather will flock together.' 'The devil's bairns have their father's luck!' 'Go to h—'" "What the devil now, Parker! d—n thy proverbs, and thy other nonsense! If I thought thou wert confounding me in thy allusions I would commit thee for contempt, therefore prithee look to thyself!" "Commit me, your Worship, for what? not surely for classing you, if so be I did class you, in such respectable company as your friend Tom Lucas's, who says you can testify to his character as, what, I wonder! I will if it please me seek other redress, and will therefore leave you to act as seemeth best to you in the charge you seem willing to substitute against me for challenging Tom Lucas; and must bid you good day at present." "Hark thee, Parker! thou art forgetting the expenses attending this business, or at least thy share of them." "Your Worship must summons me elsewhere before you procure them, which if you do, I will inform, and if needs be, swear to the black-guard oaths you have sworn during this proceeding." "And before Mr. Plainway could reply, Jonah and Jacob, frowning defiance, left the room, and departed for Ennerdale without further ceremony."

Seldom had Mr. Plainway met with so pointed a rebuke, or seen so little regard paid to his seeming decision. But being, notwithstanding his bluntness and idle habit of swearing, far from an ill natured man, he was, on recovering from the general surprise Jonah's unexpected boldness had occasioned, the first to laugh at the wit

and pertinacious obstinacy of that little angry personage. "Look well to thyself, Sinclair," said he; "for if thou didst bag him, thou hadst better have kept him there; for thou mayest perceive that nothing but blood-letting will satisfy his present mood; therefore thy master and thee must look well to yourselves." "Master may do as he likes," replied Willy; "for if ever Jonah consents to smell powder in pursuit of such game, I will freely wager to eat all he kills!" "Then pray heaven he murders neither man, woman, or child! For as we have no law for cannibals, we must perforce have a new act, which will be termed Sinclair's act! Ha, ha, ha! But pray ye be off, lads! Take the road over the moor, and let Mr. Barclay and I take the road to our dinners."

Jonah Parker, meanwhile lost no time in pursuing his route to Ennerdale; though he had no inclination to be overtaken by his late company, yet he kept muttering all the way concerning the unlooked-for defeat he had undergone, and explaining to Jacob, the divers schemes which alternately presented themselves to his irritated imagination. Jacob's valour was rather of the blustering kind; and having been hitherto restrained by his natural awe of the Justice, whom he clearly perceived was a much more exalted personage than his master, and his dread of Lucas and his associates, his prudent daring freely displayed itself in the hearty curses with which he *now* honoured the two magistrates, and those rascally scoundrels who had so villainously treated his master: a mode of revenge, which, however otherwise harmless, served to express his own thoughtless wickedness, his affection, real or pretended, for his master, and terror or hatred, of his enemies.

So much did this notion of satisfying his vengeance upon the offending parties in their absence tickle his fancy, and exalt his valour in his own conceit, that after reaching his own dwelling, he favoured his better half with a recapitulation of the whole transaction, which certainly lost nothing by the repetition. The honest woman who imagined nothing but that Mr. Parker's threats, and her husband's direful curses had been thrown in the very teeth of their opponents, was quite amazed at their boldness, which she thought was nearly equal to the doughty exploits of Tom Hickathrift and Jack the Giant Killer, which along with Tom Thumb, graced the walls of their cottage; or carefully stitched up with divers other entertaining stories, formed a tolerably large volume, or rather bundle, with which she often amused herself and others. "Lord, Jacob!" said she; "an' dud measter an' thee, ended! an' ended! co' them fine Justices and Tom Lucas sic' desp'rat neames?" "Dud we nut, think'sta! Aye, aye, we left them nowt short, al' warrant the'." "Bless us weel, Jacob! I thou't they wad a prisent ye baith in a minet!" "Aye, d—n them!" replied Jacob, "nea doubt o' that! bit we tuik care nut to let them hear us. Thou dus'ent think we wer' that fuilish, surely? Nay, nay, it was when we com' ower't moor, an up't lonnins, when they cud'ent hear us, that we co't them neames!" This explanation considerably abated the good woman's astonishment. She simply observed, "Aye, Jacob, that was far t'quietest way!" and Jacob perceiving his recital had

lost the greatest part of its attraction, dropped the subject.

The few weeks which succeeded these transactions, however important and fraught with interest to the subjects of our story, furnished nothing very particular either to the narrator or readers of it. During them, Henry and Mary had become affianced lovers; several visits had taken place between their families to the mutual satisfaction of both; and Mary, owing to a temporary indisposition with which Mrs. Wilson was affected, had on one occasion passed three or four days with her, in which time she had become nearly as great a favourite with her and her husband as with Henry; while the winning sweetness of her disposition had so far endeared her to the children that she bid fair, if she did not already, rival their dearest relatives in their artless affections. This was to her new friends a most attractive and additional proof of the natural kindness of her disposition. A grown-up person may dissemble their real sentiments, but the feelings and behaviour of children in this particular are entirely void of deceit; for their conduct towards any person with whom they are accustomed to associate will always decidedly manifest the tenderness and propriety with which that person has treated them. The proceedings of the gang were, with Henry, a subject of interest only as far as Walter was implicated, from whom he had a regular and authentic account of their intentions and connexions, which, however habitually led him to regard their pursuits as much less unobjectionable, and more lucrative, than he had formerly considered them to be. Of his knowledge of their transactions, they were all aware, as he had once or twice been in company with Walter, when business occasioned his presence at the vault; this, however, gave none of them the least uneasiness; as independent of their confidence in his prudence, they looked upon him as either actually concerned with the Armstrongs, or likely to be so very soon, and they universally imagined that his indisputable talents and courage could not fail to be highly advantageous to them in many other respects. Henry as yet anticipated no such connexion. His visits to Walter were frequent, and the pleasure he experienced during them was unalloyed by the slightest mixture of pain; his prospects of the future were cloudless as the ideal and visionary dreams of bliss which intoxicate the mind of the unexperienced enthusiast, and feeling no cause for present or past regret, he imagined himself then nearly, and firmly believed he would soon be, perfectly happy.

Between two and three months had now passed away since his acquaintance with Mary Armstrong, nor did the seeming rapidity with which they had flown, occasion any uneasiness in the mind of Henry, so fondly did he imagine that days, weeks, months, and years, of equal, or superior happiness, were strewn in his path, and inviting him to grasp them. The keen winds of autumn now waved over the plains, and whistled through those trees, the summer foliage of which had erewhile seemed impervious to their destructive blast, when at a somewhat later hour than usual, Henry entered the long, narrow, and shaded lane which then led from the uninclosed common of Cleator, to Frizington, Ennerdale, and Lamplugh. It was upon a Wednesday night, and aware that Walter and his father would both

be absent about their private business, he had determined to surprise Mrs. Armstrong and Mary with, he hoped a welcome, but unexpected visit. The moon had attained her first quarter, and her feeble and comfortless light, rendered shadowy and unequal by the rapid succession of intervening clouds, merely served to render more conspicuous a partially overshadowed atmosphere, through which the stars glittered at intervals, or which was frequently partly illuminated by the seeming dissolution of one of these little luminaries. The wind too, wild and irregular, occasioned an incessant rustling among the half-leafless hazels and towering thorns, which further obscured the solitary way, and rendered it altogether one of those disagreeable nights which are more apt to startle and alarm a timid and benighted traveller, than the most gloomy and profound darkness. Henry quickly arrived at that part of the road, which in those times was not much, or willingly frequented after nightfall; I mean the vicinity of Scalelands. It is a fact entirely devoid of romantic fiction, and can be attested by hundreds yet living, that that tenement was for a long time unoccupied, solely owing to the strong and generally believed opinion of its being haunted. The most bold and daring minds are sometimes strangely susceptible of superstitious fear, and will frequently in lonely situations, or places famed in legendary chronicles, fancy they hear voices in the "viewless winds," or start at phantoms of their own creation! But Henry Clementson's was not one of these. The strange, and seemingly plausible stories he had heard concerning the Scalelands boggle, he had seldom paid much attention to, or done so only to laugh at them; but as he drew near the lane which led to the house these stories glanced over his mind with some additional force, as connected with the information Mrs. Steele had related, concerning the connexion once said to subsist between the reputed heir of the premises and old Ellen Anderson. A circumstance which his sister had on that very day related to him with a serious countenance, likewise contributed to heighten the interest which the combined recollection of the other occasioned at this moment. It was as follows: Henry had been from home the greater part of the preceding day, and during his absence old Ellen Anderson had visited his sister. Henry had never told her the whole of what had passed on the race night; this was a circumstance which none of the parties felt anxious to make public; but some garbled statements respecting it having reached her, she had applied to Henry, and he had evidently evaded the question. She had therefore seized this opportunity of naming the expected marriage of Henry to the old woman, who seemed to listen to the news with such a sorrowful and dejected countenance as somewhat startled her. "How is this, Ellen?" said she "I thought you had been more interested in Henry's happiness than you now appear to be." "Perhaps you are so far mistaken," replied she; "that it is that very interest which makes me turn so cold an ear to your information." "Good heaven!" cried Mrs. Wilson, "What is there to apprehend? Is not Mary Armstrong fair and good." "As you suppose her," interrupted her unwilling auditor. "But she is *not* yet the wife of Henry Clementson. There is still a space between the cup and the lip, which years of

time may not suffice to travel over ; though less may satisfy you upon this subject. I have seen them together, and you know I never dwell on the secrets of others to a third person." His intimacy with Mary Armstrong was perhaps the only point in which the mind of Henry was accessible to the effects of preternatural revelation ; to fears of any other kind, or even upon any other topic, he was a total stranger. "The mirkiest path in midnight hour" was to him as welcome in that respect as the most frequented road at mid-day ; but these intermingled sensations crowding upon him, made him, in despite of his resolution, more sensitive to the noise around, and the objects before him, than at any preceeding time. In this new and unenviable state of mind he reached the lane alluded to, and threw a hasty and half suspicious glance towards the dwelling ; when for the first time in his life, his heart leapt as if it meant to quit its allotted resting place ; his hair nearly lifted his hat from his head ; and his knees trembled beneath him as he gazed with silent terror on what he momentarily believed to be the supernatural being which he had so often been told haunted the very place where he stood. The figure which had thus unmanned him, seemed yet at a considerable distance from him ; but he fancied, and which was actually the case, that it was advancing towards him. Its general appearance was that of a tall, though strangely-habited female :—and what was something different from the usual and well known description of this terrific ghost, its head dress only was white. As Henry stood full in the opening of the lane his form soon attracted the notice of the object of his terror ; and though still at a few yards distance, it stopped short, and seemed to regard him with more curiosity than fear ; while Henry having recovered his recollection, felt internally abashed at his former extreme terror, and gazed at the apparition before him, with the same desperate courage with which the stag turns to encounter the pack, from which he has before flown with such rapidity. The strange predicament in which he stood, forcibly occurred to his mind ; and he felt determined that the being before him should not escape without his ascertaining whether it was indeed a spiritual shadow, or a substance of this world. A few moments of anxious suspense followed ; and Henry was just preparing to advance towards it, when he again perceived it in motion. "Why should I fear it," thought he ; "be it of earth, I care not ! and be it otherwise, what harm can it do to me ?" His fears of its immateriality were, however, soon dissipated, for in the tall, gainly figure beside him, he quickly recognized the form of old Ellen Anderson ! She appeared to be labouring under the influence of one of those wild and wayward fancies, which at times he had heard she was subject to ; and having approached somewhat nearer, she fixed her eyes steadfastly upon him, and addressed him in that solemn and finely-modulated tone of voice which was peculiar to her, in the following manner :—

"Say, come'st thou from the silent tomb,
To warn me of my fate ?
A herald to unfold the doom,
Which veils that future state ?

Be weal, or woe, thine errand here
All welcome shalt thou be ?
The thread is wove, the hour is near,
That joins my love and me."

"Nay, my good dame," said Henry, "I come not from the tomb, to unveil the secrets of the grave; and welcome or not, here am I, fully as anxious to join my living love, as thou can'st be thy dead one. But, Ellen, what makes you here at this hour?" The old woman seemed for some time more occupied with her previous cogitations than Henry's query; for advancing close up to him, she gazed with increased interest upon his form and dress, and as if completely absorbed in her own mental recollections, she fixed her skinny hand upon the breast of his waistcoat, "Yes," she said, "such was his manly form, and such his dress, when he left me to procure that gold which should have completed our happiness; and even such was his dress when, tempted by that infernal dross, the hired murderer planted the fatal knife in his breast, and his bleeding and ghastly figure rushed into the presence of her he loved to tell the direful tale; and while clasped in one bloody and agonizing embrace, to yield up his life to him who gave it; and," raising her voice, "I even thought that thou, Henry Clementson, wert the shade of my youthful lover come to witness my last pilgrimage to the place which should have been mine. But what were the words which roused me to the recollection of this fleeting world? Saidest thou not, that thou wert as anxious to join thy living love as I could be my dead one! Yes, such were thy words, and twice hast thou crossed my path, when intent upon the pursuit that will inevitably lead thee, but fare thee well; this night I devote to another purpose; and wherefore should I render thee unhappy before thine appointed hour!" "Let that hour be now!" exclaimed Henry, with vehemence. "Ellen Anderson! you go not hence till I am satisfied. Both when absent and present, have thy mysterious words boded me evil! And what harm have I, or her whom to know is to love, ever done thee to be rendered miserable by thy predictions? Were my own happiness only at stake, thinkest thou I value thy pretended foreknowledge? No, I am no such fool! I know that thou canst neither add one joy, nor throw one sorrow into my cup; neither care I, at what hour, or on what ground, either thou or any one cross my path; but I will know the reason why I am thus singled out as the object of thy seeming hatred?" "You forget," replied Ellen, "that such disclosure rests with one as little moved with rash threats, as your own proud spirit can be; and you likewise forget the respect due to your own character, in your language towards a helpless being like Ellen Anderson. But," added she, after a pause of some duration, and softening her tone, "you are not much to blame. Thine is the only form, and thine is the only daring spirit, which old and feeble as I am, would dare to control me in this place, and at such an hour. Tell me, then, darrest thou do yet more? Wilt thou promise to meet me the seventh night after this, despite of all thou shalt see and hear in the meantime, at my own lone dwelling after midnight? But ponder well. See here," added she, wildly, and tearing the white

linen which enveloped her head from around it, "this is my shroud, given me by one who will, short as my own time is, sooner need one herself; and yet if thou darest give thy word and redeem it, thou shalt know more of Ellen Anderson than all those who are now living. What sayest thou?" "Say! I will say that if the road to thy dwelling, and thy dwelling itself, were forty times as lonely, and thyself forty times as lonely, and thyself forty times as reputed a prophetess, I would not fail thee!" "Then be it so. Pursue thy own path, and leave me; for this night I devote to the remembrance of another. But go not in wrath with me; for if thy happiness were bounded only by my wishes, believe me, thou wouldest have no reason to complain;" and waving her hand, as if to strengthen her request, Henry thought proper to comply, and departed without further ceremony.

"So," said he, involuntarily, after he had fully recovered himself, "does not this adventure throw some light upon the many mysterious stories concerning this said Scalelands spirit! May not the wanderings of this strange and impenetrable old woman have given rise to the report, and confirmation of its truth? For had I not withstood the issue, what could I have reported concerning this meeting? But stop!" cried he; instinctively obeying the word in its double meaning as the thought crossed his mind; "if such be the case, may not her actions be premeditated, and some of her prophecies be brought about without seeming miraculous when once fully understood? If so, then she is more knavish and cunning than flighty and foolish; that be my care to develope. Meet her alone at midnight! Aye, midnight, or mid-day, she shall not impose upon me! Would to God that hour was come, that I might be satisfied." Then, dropping the soliloquy, he hastened forward towards Salter.

The adventure, however, furnished such ample scope for reflection during the remainder of his journey, that on his arrival at Salter, he could not help thinking, that in following the right path he had been more guided by instinct, than by any other cause, so bewildered was his mind in reverting to the past, and pondering on the future. His visit on that night had been purely accidental; and therefore his meeting with the old woman could not be premeditated on her part; but again, was it possible that she could under such circumstances address either any mortal or imaginary being, in such smooth and pointed, though wild and fanciful verses, in so collected a manner, totally extemporary:

"The thread is wove—the hour is near,
That joins my love and me."

The meaning of this was clearly allusive to her own speedy death, to which she had reverted, both at their recent meeting, and at Arlecdon. "The thread is wove;" have these words a double meaning? thought he; did they allude to that linen which she had loosed from around her head, which, she possibly meant for a shroud? that shroud which she said had been given her by one who would sooner, short as her own time was, need one herself; and which, as she meant to be interred in it, might be construed as synonymous

with her junction to her lover already in his grave. Who had given it to her. That he was determined, if possible, to find out; that judging from the truth of that prediction, he might be better able to comprehend his own danger.

In the midst of these perplexing cogitations Henry found himself at the end of his journey. It was past ten o'clock, an hour something beyond the usual bedtime; but as he had calculated upon the absence of the men, he was not disappointed to perceive on approaching the window, Mrs. Armstrong, her daughter, and the nurse, gathered round the fire, as was generally the case at such a time, till a later hour. They were, though evidently engaged in earnest and interesting discussion, upon the point of retiring; as the fire had been covered up, or raked, their work laid by, and there was a lighted rush candle upon the table, upon which likewise lay their large Bible not yet closed, in which Mrs. Armstrong had been reading, as her hand was still resting upon it. "Strange," thought Henry, "that such a woman should ever be yoked to a man like Robin Armstrong; but what can they be talking about? Mary has been off somewhere; for that is not her usual dress when at home. What is the meaning of that tear which glitters in her eye, and is now stealing down her lovely cheek? It is a tear of sympathy! Something more than usual has happened in the neighbourhood; would I were alone with her, that I might kiss it off, and while listening to the tale of another's woes, lose, for a while, the remembrance of these incidents which perplex me with forebodings of the future. But Mrs. Armstrong is retiring, Mary has gone to the clock; it is half past ten, see! While she is winding it up, her light rests upon the picture of Noah's ark, which hangs beside it, at once an emblem of the preservation and destruction of the human race. She is looking at it, never mind, love! If our share of it be but small, we can still be all the world to each other! Good faith, I am a fool! Out of one quandary into another; but the nurse is coming to secure the door, therefore, here goes."

On recognizing his voice, Henry was instantly admitted. "What wind has blown you hither this time of night, laddie?" said the nurse. "Maybe my fears for you, nurse. I knew your master was absent, and perhaps thought Tom Westray would be running away with you." "Pshaw, ye wicked scamp, ye; quit plaguing me about that windy wallet, or here I sit till midnight." "Do so, then; and Tom and you shall lead off the dance at our wedding." "If ye will tell me when that is to happen, my absence shall thank ye for the news." "Then shortly may it be; and you shall throw the bride's stocking." "Then happy may it prove lad, and I will go to bed."

In chatting over the little trifling incidents which had occurred since they last met, Henry, alluding to Mary's dress, asked her if she had been from home. "I was," said she; "Mrs. Steele was left rather lonely this afternoon, and sent to see if I would bear her company. There was, however, another visitor; who do you think it was, Henry?" "Nay, love, I care not, provided it was not Ellen Anderson." "Oh, you are there, are you? Now, tell me truly, have

you not seen Ellen since she left Eskat?" "Aye, I have indeed seen her: but I knew not that you had done so Mrs. Steele is a great favourite with her, and is doubtless very kind to her." "She is, indeed, Henry. You may think me silly, but I have this day seen enough of that old woman to make me uneasy both on my account and that of others; and I was telling some of the particulars just before you came." "Then repeat them to me, Mary; a mother's interest in your welfare cannot exceed mine. Nay, look not so mistrustful; and, believe me, I have other motives than mere curiosity for asking the question." "Well, I will tell you then. Mrs. Steele had finished bleaching a web of her own spinning, and we were busy cutting some of it for use, when we espied Ellen Anderson. 'The poor old creature is half starved,' observed she; 'and I will try if she will accept as much of it as will serve her for a change, or perhaps to all appearance, it may serve her for another purpose shortly.' Whether the old woman heard this observation, or not, I cannot say; but she seemed ill, and low spirited; just, as I was afterwards told, is the case before one of her wildest fits; and often during her short stay fixed her eyes upon us with a melancholy interest, equally strange and unaccountable. To divert her attention, Mrs. Steele asked her if she recollected seeing me before? 'Yes,' said she, 'in a lonely hour, and an ominous place. I would it had been otherwise!' 'Why ominous, Ellen?' said Mrs. Steele, 'it was accidental, I will not say it was otherwise on her part,' said the old woman: 'but so it was. Twice have we met, young maiden, but we never meet more! If ever you again see Ellen Anderson it will be when all this world contains will be indifferent to her. Many and sorrowful have been my days upon earth, and seldom chequered by sunshine! But all things have an end; and now when I must in a few short days undergo that change which is as certain as its accomplishment is accounted uncertain, what would it have profited me, if those days of sorrow had been years of bliss? for their influence would have been as unavailing, as their duration is momentary when compared to the eternity that is before me.' For my own part I could not speak to her; but Mrs. Steele willing to avail herself of the opportunity which this solemn state of mind afforded her, pressed her acceptance of the linen which she had before designed for her; and which indeed she accepted without much entreaty. Soon after this, she seemed wholly wrapped in a state of insensibility. Her eyes were fixed upon the cloth in her hand, and her lips seemed convulsed. Mrs. Steele was either accustomed to witness these musing fits, or did not observe her situation, for she took no notice, but appeared otherwise engaged; and while I was irresolute what to do, I could distinctly hear her mutter these very words, for I think I will not be able to forget them in a sudden. 'Yes, I knew it would be so! The self-same web will suffice for both; and she who gives will need it sooner than I, who receive it. Alas! they little know how soon the one will precede and the other follow me to the grave; but why should I distress them by the disclosure!' I could not, I thought, with prudence, acquaint Mrs. Steele with what I had heard, either during the old woman's stay, or after her departure; and to tell you the

truth Henry, I felt so unhappy even after she was gone, that to prevent it being perceived, I took the earliest opportunity of returning home." "Your story, Mary," said her lover after she had finished it, "is strange, and stranger still, as connected with what I have myself this night witnessed; but was Mrs. Steele perfect in health?" "Yes, apparently; and purposes going to Whitehaven to-morrow, as usual. But why that question? and what have you seen or heard relative to what I have told you?" Henry wisely judged that it was not prudent either wholly to withhold from, or disclose the particulars of his meeting with Ellen Anderson that night to his fair and susceptible interrogator. Those things, however, that related to Mrs. Steele, he fully acquainted her with; and those, joined to what he could not avoid revealing relative to themselves, were sufficient to press heavily upon the gentle and feeling mind of Mary. To remove these disagreeable prognostications, and restore her wonted serenity, Henry, though labouring himself under similar sensations, advanced all these arguments which reason and religion so amply supply. He forcibly pointed out the reasons there were for believing that there was more of premeditation than prophecy in the predictions of Ellen Anderson; and that, granting it was otherwise, was not her allowed calamity as likely to produce a false as a true spirit of divination? or if chance had, in a few trifling instances, given weight to her predictions, was not that very circumstance more likely to mislead Ellen herself? and by influencing the minds of those who consulted her, assist in producing the results she pretended to foretell?—just as it is natural to feel curious respecting anything withheld from us, but in such instances, strengthened by the idea that it is a duty to forward it. That pure religion, either natural or revealed, equally condemned the absurdity of promulgating or believing any such doctrine; and that if it was sinful to question either the wisdom or power of divine jurisdiction relating to such foreknowledge, it was equally so to murmur at its dispensations. That although it was true that a long, happy, or prosperous life did not depend upon the well or evil doings of any individual being; yet "to do their duty, and endeavour to be happy in that state of life in which it should please God to call them," was one of the steadfast articles of the Christian belief.

This interview between the two lovers, though widely different from any other that had passed between them, was not perhaps less calculated to strengthen their mutual affection. On the contrary, that union of sympathetic feeling which it naturally excited, while it seemed to blend their happiness, their hopes and fears for the future, in one indissoluble doom, tended to rivet still closer the bonds of mutual sentiment and esteem; and therefore, although their conversation and general behaviour towards each other had been so wholly dissimilar in some respects from their accustomed mode of "charming the midnight hours," their parting was not the less tender and affectionate; nor, had the views of Henry not been pure and honourable, was such a meeting less dangerous to female virtue. The light, the trifling, and volatile moment, however gay, pleasing, and thoughtless, is certainly the least favourable to

the designs of the skilful seducer; and it is only when the virtuous feelings of the unsuspecting mind are soothed by solemn assurances of corresponding value, or wholly lost in the mingled chaos of conflicting passions, that the wily villain triumphs in the completion of his perfidious schemes. It is in conformity with the truth of these maxims, that it is observed, that "the woman who deliberates is lost;" an observation illustrated, and rendered more intelligible amongst the lower orders of society, by being translated into, "The rattling car is not soonest thrown over." Shenstone, that prince of pastoral poetry, has added the sanction of his testimony to the truth of these remarks in one of his elegies, which derives no less weight from the vigour and simplicity of the versification, than from the amiable character of so chaste a writer, which is a sufficient proof that his conviction of its correctness was more the result of cool and deliberate reflection than *experience* :—

"Skill'd in the science of Love's mane wiles,
I cloth'd each feature with affected scorn!
I spoke of jealous doubts, and fickle smiles,
And, feigning, left her anxious and forlorn;
Then while the fancied rage alarm'd her care,
Warm to deny, and zealous to disprove,
I bade my words their wonted softness wear,
And seized the minute of returning love!"

But these observations, however relevant, have unconsciously led me from the direct thread of the tale.

The early hour of morning on which Henry departed from Salter, was as lonely, as wild and cheerless, yet more gloomy and dark, than that late and solitary one which had witnessed his arrival the preceding evening. The knowledge of Ellen Anderson's visit to Salter, and her gloomy remarks, joined to what had transpired during his own interview with her, made him more uneasy, and therefore less happy, but not less in love than before. His amiable and respected acquaintance, Mrs. Steele, was then the identical person who had given her the shroud to which she had so alarmingly and mysteriously alluded! It was evident that the old woman wished it to be believed, that her own death was near; but if there was any truth in her predictions, Mrs. Steele, then in good health and spirits, was to precede her to the grave. This was a circumstance of considerable interest with Henry, both on account of his friendly intimacy with that family, and its effect upon the verity of those forebodings which indicated anything but happiness to his connexion with Mary Armstrong. It was Thursday morning; Mrs. Steele meant to go to Whitehaven that day, the only journey it was probable she would undertake before the time of his appointed meeting with Ellen Anderson at her own house. She usually returned before dark, but should she not, he had a good mind to throw himself in her way, and frame some excuse for accompanying her home. Mrs. Steele was so far from being a timid woman, that he had often heard her avow her scepticism respecting supernatural appearances; nay, so strong was her belief relative either to their innocence or non-existence, that she had frequently said, that if this ghost, real, or imaginary, which so much engrossed the conversation of the neighbourhood at that time,

should appear to her in its usual and questionable shape, she thought she durst venture to speak to it; but should Ellen Anderson take a fancy to perambulate the reported haunts of that appearance which it was supposed was connected with the fate of her lover, clothed, now that she was furnished with them, in the habiliments of the grave, a thing he considered by no means unlikely, what might be the result of her meeting with any one, an unprotected woman? It was not very usual in this vicinity to stop passengers upon the high road, but if the danger predicted was to arise from violence of any kind, that was one of the most probable; and that, as well as any apprehension connected with the whims or appearance of Ellen Anderson he might avert by his presence.

As these, and similar reflections darted through his mind, he again found himself at the opening of the lane which led to Scalelands, where he had last night so unexpectedly foregathered with Ellen Anderson. He stood for some time musing on the probable causes which could lead to the dreadful consequences which were exemplified in the case of this old and unfortunate woman. The thought more than once struck him, that she might occasionally take up a temporary residence in the tenantless building beside him. This, he thought, might account for the lights and noises occasionally said to be seen and heard within the house. If she did so, nothing was more likely than that she was there at that present time; the distance was but trifling; it was, to him, in his present frame of mind, an object of importance to ascertain whether she was there or not; and he was therefore determined, as far as laid in his power, to be satisfied. With this intention he resolutely advanced up the line, and had arrived within a few yards of the building, when a strong and steady light became instantly visible in one of the higher windows, and partially extended across the road directly opposite to it. Henry fixed his eyes stedfastly upon it, in momentary expectation of perceiving, either the immediate cause of it, or the movements of the person, or persons, from whom it proceeded, as their figures might chance to come in collision with the light. In this he was, however, totally disappointed; as he neither could perceive from whom, or from whence it emanated; nor could he discover any apparent variation or movement connected with it. He now determined to cross the hedge, and sheltered by it, advance directly opposite the windows, that he might, unperceived by the visitors within, have a much better prospect of their mysterious proceedings; but while engaged in looking out for an opening to put his designs into execution, he had the mortification, on again looking towards the house, to perceive that it was no longer visible. He now advanced slowly and cautiously towards the door; but still perceiving no symptoms of its re-appearance, he went up to the very threshold of the dwelling; he looked, all was dark, and imperceptible within: he listened, and all was silent as the grave. After spending some time about the premises, he knocked loudly at both the door and windows, and even tried to force an entrance into the house; but it was labour lost. At length, wearied out by his fruitless research, he left the place, quite bewildered and confounded. "What (said he aloud) is the

meaning of that light? or what object could it be intended to answer? Whoever it be, or whatever it be, a being of this world, or a wanderer from the other, it cannot concern one whom it evidently avoids. Of whatever seeming substance comes in contact with me, I will have ample and sufficient proof that it is no illusion. When I again see Ellen Anderson, I will have full satisfaction, or I will, what? what can I do? To lay hands upon her would be equally shamefully and unmanly. I must therefore wait the result; and wait it I will, fairly, and freely. My own wonted avocations shall content me in the meantime; for why should I foolishly interfere in the concerns of others? If such misfortunes are indeed pre-ordained, I cannot avert, but may, aye, and will, bear them like a man."

I come now to the relation of a circumstance concerning which I should feel considerable diffidence were it not by far too well authenticated to admit any doubt of its accuracy. It is a fact yet well remembered by some aged people in the neighbourhood, and known as a confirmed truth by all the middle-aged, that the death of the same Mrs. Steele to whom I have alluded was occasioned by some circumstance, equally strange and inexplicable. She had been detained at Whitehaven something beyond her accustomed hour of returning, though it was yet at an early hour of the night, when her family, who were of course rather anxiously expecting her, heard the well-known sound of the horse's feet which announced her arrival. Her husband was the first to meet her, but on approaching her, to his utter alarm and amazement, he perceived the horse dripping with sweat, and his wife pale and speechless! and scarcely retaining sufficient recollection to make him sensible of her situation, before she fainted in his arms. He instantly bore her within the house, and placed her upon a bed; but fit succeeded fit with such dreadful force and rapidity, as to threaten her immediate dissolution. All that the utmost care and attention could affect, and all that medical skill could contribute towards her relief were alike unavailing. Her mind had sustained too dreadful a shock ever to recover its wonted energy, and on the fifth day after the accident, she fell a victim to excessive terror; but whether real or imaginary was as much a mystery at that time as it is at this very hour. All was mere conjecture upon the subject, and that, of course, amounted to nothing conclusive.

A circumstance so unusual and extraordinary was soon generally known throughout the neighbourhood. A very few minutes were sufficient to carry the news to a distance so trifling as Salter, and Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter immediately hastened to Eskat to proffer such assistance as was in their power. During the course of that day the latter had revealed to her mother all that Henry Clementson had thought prudent to acquaint her with relative to his meeting with Ellen Anderson the preceding night, and the strange coincidence it bore to what she herself had heard so unguardedly fall from that singular old woman. This intelligence, Mrs. Armstrong justly thought, might prove very material in removing those terrific recollections which so overwhelmed the mind, and haunted the imagination of her unfortunate neighbour; but still it was a knowledge which required equal prudence and circumspection to unfold, both as it might

prove useful to the suffering victim, and the reputation of her daughter; as she was conscious, that however unquestionable her conduct and character, still she was extremely unwilling it should be mouthed round the country, as connected in any respect with so unpleasant and unaccountable a transaction. During the period of her present visit, her information as far as regarded Mrs. Steele, she was very certain could not in the present crisis have any beneficial effect; for though she reverted at times to the cause of her fright, yet her words were so wild and incoherent, and her relation so unconnected, that it was altogether useless to attempt to reason with her. Mary Armstrong by her own desire remained with her all night, and several times placed herself in the most likely situation to attract her attention, and at times it was evident her endeavours were not wholly unavailing; but those momentary starts of returning reason were so suddenly overturned by confused ideas of what had passed between them and their visitor on the preceding day, that those imperfect recollections concerning their conversation, to which she attempted to give utterance, were partly intelligible only to Mary, who of course had no reason to withhold her conjectures from the family, but in conformity with her own and her mother's opinion, she did not disclose, either what she had overheard, or what she had acquired through the medium of her lover; although she fully believed that a knowledge of these circumstances was the most probable means of affording some clue towards the developement of this lamentable occurrence.

Edward Wilson had that eventful evening been transacting some business at Cleator, and was just upon the point of quitting that village to return home, when he met his youthful relative, Joe Steele, riding with a speed befitting the occasion, to procure medical assistance from Egremont, who barely afforded his steed breathing time, while he informed him of the dangerous situation of his mother, and the supposed reason of it. This disagreeable intelligence of course soon reached the ears of Henry Clementson, who immediately exclaimed, "Why, fool that I am, did I not follow the forebodings of my own mind, and prevent the possibility of so fatal and ominous a circumstance?" He then, to the utter astonishment of his sister and her husband, revealed the particulars of his late interview with Ellen Anderson, as far as their meeting had any reference to Mrs. Steele, but did not choose to subject himself to their friendly importunities, by informing them of his future engagement with her, or the full extent of her predictions concerning his intended connexion with Mary Armstrong, as he was firmly resolved to fulfil the one, and pursue the other. It was soon agreed that Ellen Wilson should lose no time in proceeding to Eskat the next morning; but Henry repeatedly cautioned her, that provided she found it was still a secret, she should not allude to the true reason of his accidentally meeting with Ellen Anderson the evening before, on the same road which Mrs. Steele had travelled, though it was a circumstance which, joined to the particulars of her dress, and the metamorphosis it might probably have undergone in the meantime, if Mrs. Steele was in a situation to hear and comprehend it, might tend more than any other thing to remove her imaginary fears, and restore the tranquillity of her mind; and that he

himself would come to Eskat in the afternoon, to try if his presence could be of any service, and accompany her home. These friendly intentions were accordingly put in practice, but unfortunately they were of no avail, although the unhappy sufferer often reverted to the occasion of her fright : she said that a tall headless woman, dressed in white, accompanied, and even rode behind her when traversing that part of the road which joins the Scalelands Estate ; that it came to her quite unheard and unperceived, and quitted her instantaneously when crossing the rivulet on the east side of the lane, but any argument or allusion from others respecting this seeming apparition she was quite incapable of understanding, so dreadful and powerful was the aberration of mind occasioned by this imaginary phantom.

During this period of perplexity and suspense, Henry Clementson sought not any particular interview or conversation with his sweetheart. He saw her, indeed, daily, when inquiring after Mrs. Steele, for Mary Armstrong was one of those almost unremittingly and assiduously employed in endeavouring to minister to her relief ; but any *tete-a-tete* of a more tender nature was scarcely allowed by her close attendance at Eskat ; nor was it very much wished for by him, previous to his approaching and important meeting with Ellen Anderson. However, when death had closed the scene of suffering on the following Tuesday, Henry was one of those whose proffered services were accepted to remain by the corpse during the first night, a custom then generally prevalent, and yet frequently observed in many places throughout this county, and Fanny Westray, Walter Armstrong, and his sister, were finally fixed upon to be his companions. Those who undertake this neighbourly and melancholy office remain either in the same apartment with the deceased, or in an adjoining one ; but if the latter, it is customary to pay frequent visits to the corpse, to ascertain that it remains perfectly unmolested, and that no accidents arise from the lights which are always kept burning beside it. For some hours after the usual routine of inquirers and visitors had disappeared, the room which contained the remains of this regretted and lamented woman was not deserted by her particular friends and her sorrowing family, and the scene it presented was much more than commonly tender, solemn, and impressive. Here was a beloved wife, a tender mother, and an affectionate friend, who but a few days before was happy, in health and spirits, for ever severed from the dear and relative duties which answer to those feeling ties, by an event at once unexpected, strange, and inexplicable. The gloomy silence which prevailed was only interrupted by the broken sobs, or low and sorrowful tones of those present, as they occasionally alluded to some remembered virtue, or endearing act of the deceased, or by the clear and flexible voice of Henry Clementson, as by the desire of the afflicted husband, he read aloud some selected portions of the sacred volume.

This instructive and devout manner of passing the evening usually continued until the midnight hour, when those who remained till the morning broke, generally partook of some refreshment, which has, in more modern times, been wholly confined to tea, or coffee. When left to themselves, the behaviour of the young party on this occasion

was equally proper; Henry and Walter might indeed draw pretty close to their former respective partners, but the minds of all were too much affected by recent circumstances, and the cause of their meeting to permit little else than a general and interesting conversation relative to what had caused the death of the deceased, or confined to those expressions of attachment for each other which required no secrecy, as each individual was fully acquainted with the sentiments of their companions in that respect. As the morning advanced, and the time of departure drew near, Henry availed himself of a favourable opportunity to acquaint Mary that he would see her on the evening of the funeral, when perhaps it might be in his power to give her some additional information, as well upon the present melancholy affair, as that which seemed to affect their mutual happiness.

The succeeding night was that on which Henry had promised to meet Ellen Anderson at her own dwelling. His mind had been latterly too much agitated to permit him to enjoy any refreshing and comfortable repose, but on that afternoon, worn out by incessant restlessness, and divested of one source of suspense and anxiety by the death of Mrs. Steele, he lay down and slept soundly and peaceably for some hours. In the early part of the evening he informed his sister that she need neither wonder, nor feel alarmed at his absence that night, for he was resolved to visit Ellen Anderson, and if possible, endeavour to find out where she had been on the Thursday preceding, and likewise to hear from her own mouth what could be her motives for her late strange manner of acting both towards him and the late Mrs. Steele. That she might if she pleased acquaint her husband after he was gone of his intentions; but as all attempts to dissuade him from the enterprize would be equally fruitless and unwelcome, he hoped she would spare them both the pain of any altercation on the subject. As Margaret Wilson was too well aware that opposition in the present case would only render him more obstinate, she thought it would be most prudent to leave him to pursue his own plan free and unmolested, and therefore did not start any objections to his scheme. To dissipate the unwelcome ideas which occasionally pressed upon his mind, he amused himself by playing with the children till their usual hour of bed-time, and afterwards read and conversed with his sister and brother-in-law till their time of retirement for the evening; and then arming himself with a brace of pocket pistols, and a strong oaken cudgel which contained a concealed dagger, he snatched his hat, and sallied out for the abode of Ellen Anderson.

It was but a wild and broken night, when Henry, having crossed the Ehen, began, as he traversed the long and lonesome valley which winds round the northern extremity of Dent, to ruminate upon his approaching meeting with Ellen Anderson, who had for some time resided at Dale Bottom, latterly known by the name of Nanny-catch-house, and which is now an appendage to Lagget Estate in the boundaries of Kinniside. But the more he thought upon the subject, the greater was his perplexity. If he found it difficult to divest his mind of the idea that it was Ellen Anderson, dressed in those vestments which she herself had furnished, whom Mrs. Steele had met, it was equally

so to believe, that any premeditated mischief was couched in those wild and ambiguous expressions which either related to the late catastrophe or to himself; as, independent of her undoubted attachment to Mrs. Steele, and her professed regard for him, there was, it was perfectly evident, more of chance (he felt unwilling to term it fate) than design in the late transactions. The time appointed for his present visit, and the purport of it, were likewise equally strange and mysterious. Then and there he was to meet her, independent of all he might see or hear in the meantime. Granted that it was natural enough that Mary Armstrong had younger and quicker ears than her late acquaintance, and might therefore hear those allusions to the late regretted accident when the victim of it could not, and acquaint him with all that she had seen and heard; yet still, how was it possible that if she had calculated on Mrs. Steele's detention to a later hour than usual, and her lonely return, how could she so exactly foretell the consequences of their meeting? But reflection and conjecture were alike in vain; Mrs. Steele was dead, the event was therefore in some measure strengthening those ominous forebodings which regarded him, and there he was, firmly resolved to fulfil his appointment. The present scene of his lonely journey was as silent as picturesque. The moon was now fast increasing in splendour and circumference; and, at intervals, shone clearly upon the heights of Kinniside on the left or northern side of the valley through which he wandered; but the mountain Dent on his right, while it intercepted his immediate view of that luminary, rendered his path itself dark and gloomy; and as the wind blew from a western point, its interception by the precipitous hill which afforded him complete shelter from it, added to the calmness and tranquillity of the night, which was only invaded by the occasional gurgling of the rill which in some measure served him for a guide, by the wind which whistled above him, or by the momentary terror of the few harmless sheep which chanced to obstruct his solitary road. It wanted yet nearly one hour of midnight when Henry reached the lonely dwelling he was in quest of, and he approached, and reconnoitred the premises with that prudence and caution befitting a man who felt internally conscious both of the importance and superstitious mystery of such a visit. "I will," said he to himself, "if it be possible, keep myself clear of any delusion whatever. Neither the lonely place nor hour, nor the strange stories attached to this singular being, shall prevent me from seeing, hearing, or judging for myself; for mortal fraud or foul play I am prepared, and they shall earn the spoil before they profit by it! And for interference of another kind, it shall be both steel and pistol proof before will believe in its immateriality."

In this determined frame of mind he observed a light glimmering through the only two or three panes of glass which remained in the window, as the remaining part of what was meant for one, was rendered as impervious to the reception or reflection of any light within, as necessity required it should be impenetrable to the rain and cold from without. Henry was not long in availing himself of the opportunity afforded him by this only luminous part of the dwelling to try to discover what was passing within it, and at the first glance he

fully perceived the extreme wretchedness of the solitary being who inhabited it. On the middle of the apartment lay a small supply of fuel, part of which had lately been removed to the usual fireplace, and was then burning sufficiently bright to afford a tolerable view of the desolate scene around. One single chair, and a couple of old stools, were the only furniture of that description; two or three shelves, which he observed were arranged in one corner of the house, it was probable, contained the implements for preparing whatever food the place afforded, and the food itself; and in another stood the bed, the only thing which conveyed any idea of comfort within the habitation, as it seemed not destitute of covering, and was nearly surrounded with green curtains. On that part of the bed which stood nearest to the hearth sat the thin and emaciated form of old Ellen Anderson: a pair of white woollen stockings hung loose upon her legs, and a comfortable petticoat of blue duffel slightly tied round her waist, was the only remaining under garment. She had apparently been in bed, for her long white tresses were tolerably confined within a clean nightcap, and an old silken shawl tied round her neck, and breast, and a large piece of common Kersey thrown over her shoulders, composed the rest of her dress. In her hand was a bundle of written papers, which, after carefully counting over the sheets, she deposited underneath her pillow; and Henry imagining from her appearance that she was expecting his arrival, quitted the window for the purpose of entering the house. Judging it prudent, however, to take a second survey of the premises before he entered them, he clearly perceived two men advancing slowly down the only inclosure which belonged to the tenement, and which was on every other side surrounded by the open fells. This seemed to him rather suspicious; and conscious that they had not perceived him, he concealed himself behind a large black thorn which stood exactly upon the boundaries of the inclosure, and within a few yards of the window. The men, as he expected, came directly up to it, and the moon, which after she had turned round the northern extremity of Dent, was no longer shaded by the intervening hills, shining out pretty clearly, he had sufficient light, and full leisure, to observe them distinctly. He soon recognised one of them to be his quondam acquaintance Brown, but the other he believed was quite a stranger to him. The dress of this unknown was completely hidden by a large grey overshirt which reached below his knees; and therefore a pair of clogs, and such a hat as was usually worn by the common peasantry, were the whole which this huge outer garment permitted to be seen. The figure of this stranger was however too remarkable when once seen to be easily forgotten; he could not, to judge from the contrast between him and Brown as they stood together at the window, be less than six feet six or seven inches in height, broad, bony, and athletic; and what was equally as remarkable when the time and place of his appearance was considered, Henry imagined from his heavy step, his listless movement, and drooping head, that he must have passed his grand climacteric. Whilst they remained at the window some words passed between them, but in so low a tone
f voice as to be quite unintelligible to him, but having satisfied

themselves that the seeming object of their visit was entirely alone, they quitted their station, and advancing somewhat nearer to Henry, the voice of the old man was perfectly audible. "Now we mun part : thou kens our agreement. Nea mortal mun know what hes passed between yon old woman and Will Fletcher ! An hour is lang enuf for my bisness, but mark, and mind my words ! gang away out of seight an hearing, or my curse and hatred shall wait thee. When I want thee, I will whistle thrice. Now, how-way ! I will see thee gone befure I see Ellen Anderson." Brown instantly departed without reply, and his companion having watched him fairly out of sight, immediately sought the entrance into the dwelling.

The name of the speaker pronounced by himself instantly removed some part of Henry's conjectures respecting him, as the character, though not the identity of black Will Fletcher, the giant of Cringle Gill, was quite familiar to him. The size, the strength, and actions of this man, had been a favourite theme with many aged people in Henry's infancy. He had been the most noted freebooter of his day ; and not content with plundering the living, he was more than suspected of stealing and despoiling the dead ; and the imperfect administration of justice at that time, in remote parts of the northern counties, was the only cause which had prevented him from being called to a strict account for his numerous depredations. He was, Henry remembered to have heard, the maternal uncle of Brown ; and had, while still in the prime of manhood, removed to the eastern parts of the county, where he was for a length of time nearly as well known as in this vicinity ; but why after so many years absence he had chosen to return for the purpose of again seeing Ellen Anderson, was indeed both strange and mysterious ! Henry eager to see and hear all that was likely to transpire between these two remarkable characters, availed himself of the time of Will Fletcher's entrance to remove some part of the different materials which secured the broken part of the window from the weather, and so far succeeded, that before the other had entered the door, he had perforated an aperture sufficient to enable him clearly to distinguish by the fire which then blazed fiercely, all that might chance to pass between them, as well as to hear distinctly the whole of their discourse. He had but barely time to observe that the old woman still remained in the same situation in which he had first seen her, when the tall and terrific figure of Fletcher entered the house. It is a well known fact, that the first step towards the accomplishment of any action which will not bear a conscientious investigation is generally the most difficult to overcome ; and even the practised murderer will with more steadiness strike the fatal blow than previously endure the eye, or inquiring look of his intended victim ; from whence it would appear that there is more of his Divine Creator stamped in the countenance of man, than the most depraved heart can calmly resolve to deface without some manifestation of the wickedness of its premeditated purpose. It was with feelings somewhat similar to these, that Will Fletcher now entered the solitary abode of Ellen Anderson, for although a consciousness of former misdeeds, and a desire that all knowledge of them should perish with her who alone could disclose

them, had made him resolve upon a procedure which could not be accomplished without a personal interview, and although he believed that no mortal being then witnessed his actions, except the feeble and helpless creature before him, yet while he knew that his appearance was too remarkable to attempt a concealment which was inimical to the premeditated purport of his visit, it was with a downcast and averted countenance that he advanced towards her whom he thus sought, and who seemed to regard him with the same cool and contemptuous composure as if she had been forewarned of his coming, and foreseen the consequences of his journey. After a silence of some time, during which the embarrassment of the gigantic visitor was easy to distinguish, he turned himself towards her whom he meant to address, but still without looking at her, and said, "Woman, dost thou yet know who stands before thee?" "Thinkest thou," replied Ellen, "that twice sixty years of sorrow could make me forget the murderer of Richard Robinson? But what makest thou here? Begone, sinful man that thou art! and try whether the short time thou hast yet to live, spent in tears and penitence, can atone for crimes so monstrous as thine." It appeared as if the sound of a human voice, though the voice denounced nothing calculated to sooth the apprehensions of the giant of Cringle Gill, had completely dissipated his embarrassment, for he now raised his head, and fixed his eyes steadfastly upon her. "I come not here," said he, "to listen to thy stwories, nor to ask thy advice. What hand I hed in that bisness is known best to mysel'; but be our meeting as short as thou likest. I know thou still keepest about thee some papers containing a stwory of thy own life; throw them into that fire and than I'll leave thee; but if not, I'll just de'et mysel', and now thou knowest my errand." "What is the story of my life to thee, devil that thou art?" replied Ellen. "Could I not, had it pleased me, have related all that concerns thee many years since, and wherefore then shouldst thou disturb me thus? Begone, wretch," cried she, raising her voice, "lest there be those within hearing both able and willing to punish thee for thy intrusion!" "Thou dost not deny it then," replied Willy. "Thou cannot hope to fretten me! Who should be near us, thinksta, but them that be of me own setting? Sua mair words are useless, therefore," (endeavouring to intimidate her by his voice and gestures) "damn thee, gie ma them directly, or I'll fling thee thesel into that fire in a minute." "Will Fletcher," said she, "beware what thou doest; all unprotected as thou thinkest me, there is yet near us one both able and willing to defend me from thy violence. Stand back," said she, with equal energy and wildness, and stooping meanwhile by the side of the bed on which she still sat, "or I will yet reveal whose was this dagger, and whose blood it is that yet crusts its point." "That, by heavens, thou shalt not," cried Fletcher, roused to madness by the sight of the dagger, "if such be thy intentions, the knowledge of that deed shall die with thee."

During the greater part of this dialogue Henry had remained at the window, and he remarked with considerable anxiety all the proceedings of the old and gigantic personage before him; but when he heard him avow the purport of his visit, and his intention of ac-

completing it by violence if necessary, he left his station, and moving cautiously to the door, which Fletcher had never thought of securing, he stood ready to interfere the moment that Willy should attempt to carry his threats into execution ; therefore no sooner did the giant of Cringle Gill attempt to lay hands upon the old woman, than he found his arm arrested, and himself thrown backward to the middle of the floor.

Will Fletcher was a man who, through the long course of a life spent in almost every species of wickedness, had not been easily appalled or withheld from his purpose by fears of a supernatural nature ; and this apathy had strengthened with his years, otherwise this unwelcome and unexpected interruption, in such a time and place, and under such circumstances, must have quite unmanned him ; but in lieu of this, no sooner did he ascertain that the man before him, who had thus gained a knowledge of those transactions which he had been so anxious should be for ever buried in oblivion, was seemingly alone, than his fears of a discovery, and rage at the intrusion, alike prompted him to turn the full stream of his vengeance upon the person of the intruder ; and in doing so, the remembrance of his former unrivalled prowess, and the awe with which he was still accustomed to be regarded, appeared to have obliterated all ideas of the inequality of the encounter he then meditated. To the authoritative commands of Henry, who ordered him instantly to quit the premises, he therefore made no immediate reply ; but once convinced that he was unaccompanied, he rushed upon and grappled with his youthful antagonist before he could, had he been so inclined, either avail himself of the formidable weapon which he grasped in his right hand, or recover from the surprise which the unexpected temerity of so old an opponent naturally created. "What means the hoary scoundrel by this strange assault?" exclaimed Henry. "Desist, old man, before I am compelled to cast a stain upon my manhood by injuring one so incapable of resistance as thou must be." But he spoke in vain. "I will let thee know," cried his antagonist, while his dark and wrinkled features were convulsed with passion, and his large grey eyes sparkled with rage, "that black Will Fletcher is still an overmatch for thee, and I will secure both thee and that old woman for telling stwories consarning the giant of Cringle Gill." Finding his remonstrances ineffectual, Henry was compelled to act with decision, lest his adversary might be reinforced by the arrival of Brown, whose curiosity, he judged, would not long suffer him to keep at any great distance. He therefore threw his left arm round the body of his assailant, and availing himself of the advantage afforded him by the old man's furious endeavours to wrench him down, he slipped him from off his breast with sufficient force and celerity to prostrate him upon the floor." "Rise," said he, "begone, and leave the house, otherwise I will be compelled to dismiss thee in a manner still more disagreeable both to thee and myself." The old wretch did not hesitate to comply with the first injunction ; he rose slowly and deliberately, but though his fall had made him look rather crest-fallen, it had not in the least degree quenched his irascibility. If the violent rage which had previously agitated him was no longer so visible, it had only given way to a more sullen, but not less im-

placable scowl of revenge and hatred; and instead of retiring, he whistled thrice with such energy as made the old building ring again. "I have lived ower lang," said he, despondingly, "and have grown old and feckless, or I had needed no help either to witness or assist my revenge; but thou shalt feel that befowre I leave this house, any knowledge thou canst gain from Ellen Anderson about me will not be to thy profit. See," said he, turning eagerly to the door which Brown was just then entering, "yonder stands the only living man I have cause to fear, help me to master him, and all I have shall be thine." "You forget, Uncle," replied Brown, in a low and emphatic tone of voice, "that I, as well as yourself, am no longer the man I have been. I know yon young man well; you may remark he is not without arms; and were it not so, I assure you, that you yourself in your best day would have found him a dangerous opponent. What then would our feeble efforts, though united, avail us? Therefore it is best for us either to leave him to his own business, or for me to speak to him." These observations seemed to have some effect upon the veteran ruffian, for after eyeing Clementson for some time he observed, "Thou mayst possibly be wiser than me; but let us remain here and see what his business is at this place, and with yon old woman."

The reflection that there was no collusion between Ellen Anderson and her visitors, and that they were unfurnished with fire-arms, from which alone he had any reasons for alarm, having dissipated his apprehensions of Brown's presence, Henry found himself had leisure to turn his attention towards the object of his own visit, and it was with infinite regret and disappointment he perceived that the obstructions he had thus unexpectedly met with would probably be the means of rendering nugatory his ardent and anxious desire of fully questioning her concerning his own affairs.

The mental energy occasioned by the entrance of Fletcher, and the painful ideas awakened by his presence, had completely exhausted the remaining strength of the old woman; and though the interest excited by the scene between him and Henry Clementson had fostered the animation created by the exertions she had used during her own interview with him, yet it had no doubt proportionally contributed to render still weaker a frame already enfeebled by sickness and worn out by age and misfortunes; and therefore when Henry found himself leisure to attend to her, he perceived that she had sunk down upon the bed on which she had been sitting. He immediately raised her up, and supporting her head with the pillow, he had the satisfaction to see her progressively revive, and to evince a perfect recollection both of his person and the object of his visit; for as soon as her strength appeared equal to the effort, she turned her eyes, which beamed with that peculiar wild fervency which always accompanies a protracted dissolution, full upon him. "Henry Clementson," said she, "my hour is come, and thy presence hath enabled me to redeem the promise I made thee. Search underneath that place where my aching temples have so often in vain endeavoured to find repose, and thou wilt find some written papers, and all the earthly treasure I possess; quick, give them to me!" Henry

lost no time in obeying her, and placing them in her hands, she thus proceeded :—"These papers," said she, "contain the particulars of a life of misery. They are thine, and thou mayest peruse them at thy leisure. Thou wilt find in them my motives for screening yon hoary villain; and though I will be no more, I wish thee to leave to him, who alone can rightly judge and punish, a wretch who is already tottering upon the brink of the grave. This sum I also give to thee. Even at this solemn hour which I have long foreseen, and, I hope, properly prepared myself for, I feel those prejudices incidental to human frailties. I therefore wish that sum to procure for my mortal remains a due observance of those decent rites which are customary in the place where I live and will die. But let my last bed be in that hallowed ground where thou, and she whom thou lovest, once perceived me. Henry Clementson, wilt thou promise me this, and fulfil that promise as faithfully as thou hast hitherto dealt with me?" "Yes, doubt it not; but I hoped to derive from this visit some explanation both concerning our last meeting, and the accomplishment of what, on that night, seemed to me as unlikely, as it proved but too certain. Answer me truly, if thou yet regardest me. Hast thou, since that night, seen her who hath preceded thee to the grave?" The change which Henry had anticipated for the last few minutes seemed now rapidly approaching. The unearthly brilliancy which had hitherto glittered in her eyes, perceptibly diminished as she appeared lost in inward meditation. "I hear thee," said she, musingly. "I have not. As for thyself," added she, again raising her eyes, which yet glimmered with the remains of that lambent spirit which had lately animated them, "would that thou mightest be happy! but thy fate seems now veiled in mystery. I promised to unfold somewhat to thee, and could it prove of service, would I might be permitted to redeem my promise; but I cannot now. I am dying; my days are accomplished upon earth, but my hopes of Heaven rest firmly upon the merits and sufferings of my Redeemer." The energy with which she pronounced the last sentence completely exhausted her. She fixed her dying eyes upon the face of Henry, and expired without a groan!

The tranquillity with which she finally resigned her breath, made Henry for some time dubious of her departure, but the light yet emitted by the fire enabling him to distinguish the objects around him with sufficient accuracy, he left the bed, and after a slight search discovered a number of candles, which the old woman had evidently prepared for her wake-lights; and availing himself of one of them, he soon ascertained that she was gone for ever. He stood for some time gazing upon the corpse in a ruminating mood, regardless of the presence of Brown, who yet stood at a respectable distance from the bed; while, whether abashed by the certainty that the person whose every motion he still continued to watch, knew the full extent of that crime, the concealment of which had occasioned his journey thither, or awed by the natural dread which the prospect of death under such circumstances is calculated to inspire, Will Fletcher still retained his station near the door. At length, roused to a sense of the singular situation in which he stood, he closed the eyelids of the de-

ceased, and turned towards his mute companions. "Brown," said he, come hither. Thou hast heard what passed between Ellen and myself, and I am glad of it. Here is the money she put into my hand. I will count it before thee." He did so. It amounted to a sum scarcely sufficient to bury her in the respectable manner she seemed to desire; but that was a matter of indifference to Henry. "Whatever I have seen or heard this night, as well as any knowledge I may derive from these papers I wish not to make public; and I need not say that it cannot be, either thine, or thy uncle's interest, to reveal what has passed: abide here by the corpse, till I procure the necessary assistance from Lagat and Thwaites to lay out the body, and remain by it till to-morrow. I will frame some excuse for happening to be present at such a time, and when you hear us coming, you may depart unseen. Thou must go directly to Robinson's, who is the present overseer. Tell him to be here betimes without fail, to give orders for the funeral on the third day after this; and to provide in a decent manner all things necessary for it. Say such are my orders, that I will see him paid, and that I will see him to-morrow myself. Art thou content to do this without any evasion?" "I am," replied Brown. "Then farewell for the present," said Henry, and instantly proceeded to execute his part of this remarkable agreement.

Notwithstanding the lonely hour on which Henry proceeded upon his melancholy mission, he was not long in procuring the assistance he sought, as, in fact, the matrons of these lonely tenements had often latterly visited the old and helpless woman, and perceiving her situation, had wished her to accept of some company for two or three of the preceding nights. This warning, therefore, though given by an unexpected visitor, was not wholly unlooked for; and Henry having accompanied them to the place, and agreed with them respecting the probable time of their stay, he turned his own steps homewards without any further delay.

The events which had characterized his midnight journey afforded him sufficient ground for reflection during his return home, and though he had been disappointed in the principal personal objects of his visit, he still felt better satisfied than he had previously done. That mysterious current of feverish expectation was now for ever at rest: he had fulfilled all that he had hitherto promised, and was determined to redeem his remaining pledge. He had done all that was in his power to do: and as he revolved in his mind all that had passed, he felt conscious that if he had neglected this appointment, he would have bitterly regretted it afterwards; and though he had obtained no further elucidation, either respecting the late transactions at Eskat, or his own connexion with Mary Armstrong, yet still he felt comparatively easy respecting the future, when contrasted with that tormenting anxiety which he had endured for the last few days. All kind of suspense was now at an end. Ellen Andersson was dead; and as no further knowledge, no perplexing source either of hope or fear could now be derived from her foreknowledge, he could calmly review all that had passed, and after cool deliberation and reflection, determine what course it was prudent to pursue. In order to do this he resolved to suspend the perusal of the papers then in his possession

ill after the funerals, that he might peruse them with a mind comparatively free from those conflicting recollections which at present almost stupified him. While thus he meditated, he had retraced his steps as far as the Ehen, which having crossed by the bridge, he was aroused from his reverie by distinctly hearing the trampling of horses, which then seemed descending the hill which leads down to Wath. Accordingly just as he reached the latter place, he found himself in the presence of five or six men, and their respective charges, amongst whom he directly recognized the very person he wished to see, Robinson, of Long Moor, and along with him, Will Sinclair, and others whom he knew. As Henry stood beneath a wall which partly shielded him from the moonlight, his first appearance caused no little alarm amongst the party, preceded as it was by a shrill whistle, till advancing forwards, he was soon known; notwithstanding which, Robinson asked with some trepidation if all was well? "For anything I know," replied Henry, "but I want to have some talk with you; therefore either come this way, or let them move on." Having soon acquainted Robinson with all he judged proper or material, and to which he promised a ready and faithful observance, they separated; the one to return home, and the other to attend to the business in which he was engaged.

The time that yet intervened between these transactions and the funeral of Mrs. Steele, which took place on the following Saturday, Henry passed chiefly at home; but his sister, whom he had acquainted with nearly all that transpired, prompted as well by his desire, as guided by her own wishes on the subject, visited the solitary tenement within which rested all that was mortal of her old acquaintance, that she might have the satisfaction of seeing that everything was properly arranged and conducted previous to the funeral, which was to take place at Arlecdon on the Sabbath. Though his curiosity was great respecting the documents he had preserved from the flames, yet he had sufficient resolution to abide by the decision he had previously made as to the propriety of immediately perusing them; but there remained one obligation which he had promised the late unfortunate possessor of them to see fulfilled, the precise place of her interment, which required his personal attendance to point out to the sexton. Accordingly he found himself under the necessity of paying a visit to Arlecdon. The day had been favourable for hunting, and the pack kept by the Nimrod of that time and neighbourhood, Skelton Rowrah, having had a fine run, he himself, Parson Baxter, and some of the keenest hunters of that day, among whom was Ned Wilson the sexton, were then descanting upon the pleasures of the chase, and enumerating the windings of poor puss, (then hanging by her legs beside them) in the house of our old acquaintance, good Harry Jenkinson. Of the company usually present on such an occasion, lang John Wilson, of Kirkland How, was too important an acquisition to remain long unnoticed. John was considered by far the first man in the country to refer to when a "Seehow," that word so cheering to expecting sportsmen, was wished for; and was consequently a special favourite with the squire. His namesake of contrasted notoriety was, though quite illiterate, a shrewd and ingenious little

fellow, and held in equal regard by the parson, who, as well as his neighbour, loved a joke and a foaming tankard; and the difference of size between the two Wilsons happened to be the subject of some witticisms between them when Henry entered the room. Ned perceiving the laugh went rather against him, was obliged to have recourse to his natural talent to retrieve the affront thus offered to Lilliputian importance, and strutting up to the chimney with assumed mortification and impatience, turned towards the squire. "I'll bet a crown bowl," cried he, "that if Jwohn Wilson an' me baith stand straight up agyan this wo,' I'll reach farther than he can de for his life." "Damn thee for a little conceited monkey!" exclaimed the squire; "I'll bet thee a bowl that John Wilson reaches two feet beyond thee, stand where and how you will." "A wager beet than!" said Ned, "I tak Parson Baxter and Harry Clementson for witnesses."

This agreement being ratified, notwithstanding the significant winks and shrugs of the parson, who imagined that Ned's seeming passion had got the better of his prudence, lang John Wilson advanced up to the place fixed upon, and rising upon his toes, he stretched every member to the very uttermost extent, making his mark at such a height as made the well-wishers of his diminutive opponent tremble for the result; while the Squire, and John himself, nothing doubted but that he had secured a complete conquest. Ned, however, seemed nothing abashed, he drew up to the appointed place with at least equal confidence of victory, and stood erect upon the place which his gigantic antagonist had previously occupied; but instead of reaching his arms *upwards*, to the astonishment of the whole company, whose eyes were riveted upon him, he extended them in quite an *opposite* direction, and being remarkably short, and rather bow-legged, his fingers reached to within eighteen inches of the ground. "Tak' nwtotish lads of our wager. I betted I would reach farther than Jwohn Wilson, baith standing straight up; and this," cried he, drawing the chalk across the wall at the same instant, "is *my way*!" The laugh which succeeded the accomplishment of this feat was proportionate to the despondency with which the company had hitherto regarded Ned's chance of winning the bet. The squire himself joined heartily in the general uproar; and after honouring Ned with a few curses, consented to pay the forfeit.

During the discussion of this acceptable and agreeable edition, the hilarity of the company gradually increased, and the parson and squire alternately played off their jokes upon each other. "Harkye, Sir Squire," said Baxter, "you are a magistrate, and consequently in the habit of fining people for swearing in your presence. can you tell us what is the usual price of an oath?" "Yes. A shilling for a blackguard, and half-a-crown for a gentleman. Why dost thou ask?" "Because," replied the other, "you have sworn several; but as you are the only magistrate present, we will be content with the price of one only. and we will drink it either to your better manners, or higher promotion." Here, Harry Jenkinson, the parson has turned beggar for a bowl of punch, and there fore," said he, throwing down half-a-crown, "as he is balancing swearing against

drinking, himself and thee may fix the price between ye." "I always act conscientiously," rejoined the parson; "and therefore, Harry," said he, giving him *one* shilling, and pushing the remainder towards the squire, "the blackguard price will content us at this time."

During the second general laugh, occasioned by this sally, Henry drew Ned apart from the rest of the company, and informing him what he wanted, they posted off to the church-yard together. On a close inspection Henry discovered, exactly upon the place where he judged he first observed Ellen Anderson, a protuberance of earth, undoubtedly the remains of a grave of no modern date, and turning to his companion, asked him, "If he thought any person had been buried in that place?" "Nutm in my time," replied Ned; "but I have hard old fowk say that a man was buried hereabouts, and black Will Sinclair, and another sic like chap, stail his body; but that wasnt true, because fowk mustered and sank down till they fand his body was still there; and sua o' wasnt true that was laid to't charge of Cringle Gill giant." "Well, then," said Henry, "here shall be the resting place of old Ellen Anderson! and Ned, if thou diggest her grave on this very place, I will give thee a quart over and above thy dues as sexton." "Never fear that, Harry," replied Ned. "I will mark the spot, and we will gang back and drink the quart, and than it will be a debt of conscience, like Squire Skelton's last bowl." To this proposal Henry made no objection, and they were again presently under the now jovial roof of good Harry Jenkinson.

The double rebuff the squire had met with only made him more desirous, and more scrupulous about the means of striking even with the parson, upon whom he was now endeavouring to retort. "Look ye, parson," said he, "you keep directly in front of your house a stone globe, which is a representation of the whole world; and immediately above your door is a figure of harpy, which I take to be a just emblem of priesthood. Its face and breast representing the smooth and wily devices whereby you dupe and decoy that world which it overlooks, while the rest of its carcass indicates the rapacity with which you treat your victims when in your power." "Prithee, peace," said Baxter, "for I must needs think that my chance of paradise is at least equal to yours." "That is as true as any sermon you ever preached," retorted Skelton, eagerly; "but then it will be *Paradise lost*." A harpy is an imaginary creature in old and fabulous history, which possessed the face and breasts of a virgin, the body and wings of a vulture, with the claws and ears of a bear; and the globe and harpy alluded to are yet, or were very lately, to be seen in front of the ancient Parsonage House at Arlecdon. Henry was in no spirits to enjoy their jokes at present, and therefore seized an early opportunity of leaving them in the midst of their conviviality and returning home.

The day now arrived upon which the remains of Mrs. Steele were to be removed to their final residence; and the estimation in which she was held by the whole neighbourhood, as well as the strange manner of her death, caused a more than usual attendance upon the melancholy occasion. The precise manner in which funerals are conducted throughout the kingdom differ very considerably; and

in the ceremonies observed between death and burial, there are some trifling particulars in which there are distinctions observable almost every parish. These, it is to be remarked, principally consist in the peculiar local manner in which invitations are given, and which walking, or wauking, is conducted, when those deceased are, were considered to belong to the established and reformed Church for in general essentials, such as the usual form of following the body in a kind of regular and consistent procession, raising psalms, and the ceremony within the Church and at the grave, there is little variation throughout the kingdom, except what convenience has rendered either customary or indispensable in very large towns. There is, however, one custom generally observed in this part of the kingdom amongst all denominations of Christians, for those who differ in many particulars from the Establishment, generally adopt the prevailing fashion of placing evergreens upon a small table on the outside of the door; a custom, I believe, of Pagan origin, though emblematic of futurity and which has consequently both preceded and survived the rise and downfall of the Roman Catholic Religion. It will readily be admitted by all dissenters from the Established Church of England that all deviations from it have originated in conscientious motives, and that all rites and ceremonies incidental to the form and manner of interment, are alike unavailing to the deceased; and therefore their necessity must be regulated by the general feelings of decency and humanity, and their utility confined to the influence and beneficent effect which the solemnity of the scene is calculated to impress upon, and the opportunity it affords for conveying instruction to the minds of the living; and in these essentials the Protestant Establishment certainly yields to none in the world. Its ritual is plain and simple, though eloquent and sublime; and while it is delivered to the auditors in that language only which they generally understand, it is at once calculated to rivet those doctrines which are interwoven with the first rudiments of their belief and understanding, rouse them to a consciousness of the frailty of their own existence, and soothe their regret for the deceased by encouraging them to trust in the promises of a righteous Redeemer. But to return to the narrative of our tale.

When Edward Wilson and his wife, accompanied by Henry, arrived at Eskat, a considerable number of visitors were already assembled, and the dinnering, if we may be allowed the term, soon after commenced. This, as usual, consisted of cold meat of different kinds, and, at that season of the year, apple tarts, bread, cheese, and butter, home-brewed ale to drink, and the still customary funeral dram. Those who are not invited, or come not to the dinner, always, as is still usual, even among the poorer classes, have the option of drawing up to a table covered with bread, cheese, and butter, and after slightly partaking thereof, are always offered a dram of some kind of spirits. On this occasion the dinner was universal; and such dinners are of a peculiar sombre cast, owing, as well to the respect due to the cause of their being given, as to the silence which prevails during the time of eating: they likewise derive some additional solemnity from the circumstance of the waiters wearing white mourning, which, of course, forms a strong contrast to the remainder of their

dress, which is generally of a sable description. This decorous and characteristic solemnity was much more in accordance with the feelings of Henry Clementson, than that part of the scene which often immediately succeeds; for even then it had become customary on such occasions to gather round the fire, and fill the crowded apartment with the smoke and consequent perfume of tobacco, a custom which may aid or provoke meditation in solitary places, or when in private company, but is certainly improper when introduced in public companies of such descriptions, as it then becomes at once a proof of apathy and self-indulgence.

To avoid this disagreeable scene, and to escape the numberless idle questions which rumour had already circulated among those groups which loitered about the premises, relative to his being present at the decease of Ellen Anderson, he availed himself of his intimate acquaintance with the family to pay a visit to the corpse; after which he seated himself among the relatives and particular friends of the deceased till the time of lifting arrived. During that period of silent sorrow, Henry revolved in his mind all the transactions which bore any analogy to those unaccountable predictions which he now witnessed so unhappily fulfilled, and those which related exclusively to his connection with Mary Armstrong; and in spite of his natural fortitude, he could not avoid looking upon the present circumstance as somewhat ominous. It was from the pursuit of that, and he remembered from that only, that he had an evil to apprehend; and were he to place implicit confidence in the truth of what so melancholy an example was then before him, prudence required that he should for ever give up her whom alone he could love. But his eyes met those of Mary Armstrong, who was sitting, a sincere mourner, directly opposite to him; and his feelings instantly revolted at the idea he was endeavouring to cherish. "Give her up!" said he, mentally. "See Mary Armstrong in the arms of another! Was it possible I could ever form such an idea? No! I would sooner die a thousand deaths. Do not I feel, even now, that I would much rather die with her, or for her, than live with any other? No! while she loves me, were Ellen Anderson to rise from the grave to enforce her predictions, I would not do so! I cannot be happy without her; and if our happiness be but transient the longest life is but a little less so! Therefore it is a folly to cherish schemes inconsistent with my peace, and if inevitable misfortunes are to be my portion, I must arm myself with fortitude to bear them." From this train of thinking he was only roused by the entrance of the joiner to screw up the coffin. An enthusiast even in sorrow, he gazed with tearful eyes upon the grief of those dear relatives who finally and successively withdrew from paying their last sad duties to the remains of her whom they had so fondly loved; and as he himself advanced by the side of Mary Armstrong to indulge in one last look at the now clay cold face of so beloved an acquaintance, he pressed with his lips the lifeless cheek upon which her tears had fallen, and inwardly vowed, at that solemn moment, that while he lived, he never would love another.

Every preparation being now completed, the funeral was soon over. The distance to Ennerdale Bridge is not great, and two

short hours from the time of their departure from Eskat, brought all those back again who were invited to spend the evening. Henry, his sister, and her husband, accompanied the Armstrongs upon their return from the church, and spent some time at Salter; which friendly and casual visit Mrs. Armstrong promised to repay in the course of the ensuing week, and at Mrs. Wilson's urgent request, consented that Mary should accompany her home the succeeding day from Arlecdon, whither she meant to accompany the remains of old Ellen Anderson, and remain with her to the period of her own visit. As for Henry, he briefly informed both Walter and Mary of the documents in his possession, and it was agreed that Henry should defer the perusal of them till the following Tuesday, when Walter, whose curiosity was equally as strong as that of any other individual, could conveniently be present. This being arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, they separated; and Edward Wilson, his wife, and Henry, after making a short call at Eskat, returned home.

The next day, being the Sabbath, was that on which the last funeral from the lonely tenement of Dale Bottom, now termed Nanny Catch House, was destined to take place. In conformity to this promise, Henry had strictly charged Robinson to be careful that every thing was conducted in the most decent and orderly manner; and as she was to be interred at Arlecdon, many of the customs peculiar to that parish were adhered to on the occasion. It is yet the regular practice in that district, for all those who are included in the bidding, to carry with them some necessary article towards the required expenditure; such as butter, cheese, cream, tea, sugar, bread, &c., so that there is generally a superabundance of these indispensables; and, whether owing to the extraordinary character of the deceased, or to the charitable regard of the neighbourhood, there was no lack, either of visitors on the night proceeding the funeral, or at the funeral itself. Henry Clementson himself assisted to screw down the remains of the aged and unfortunate woman, and likewise chose that portion of the psalms used on the occasion. It was the first two and last two verses of the eighty-fourth; which are at once most beautifully expressive of the glory of the Almighty, and the perfect reliance of the inspired Psalmist upon his goodness and mercy. Notwithstanding the distance, the concourse of young and active rustics was so numerous, that Henry, to his infinite satisfaction, had no occasion to resort to any unusual conveyance. There are still in the neighbourhood several remains of those ancient crosses which were erected and used as resting places when conveying the dead to any considerable distance during the prevalence of Popery, yet observable. Of these, the most remarkable are now distinguished by the erection of dwelling-houses at or near the places where they stood, as at Loweswater, Lamplugh, Croslaken in Frizington, Cross, in Hensingham, and numberless other places, which are easy to trace throughout the whole of that district belonging to the ancient church of Saint Bees. There was, however, no occasion to profit by these pious erections at the funeral of old Ellen Anderson, even if they had fallen in the direct line of march. The procession soon traversed the valley which divides the parishes of Cleator and Kinniside, passed the Ehen at Wath, and proceeded

directly up Frizington to Arlecdon. Upon its arrival at the last-mentioned place, it was joined by great numbers, many of whom came through motives of curiosity, that they might afterwards derive some self-importance, by observing that they were present at the funeral of so old and extraordinary a person. Henry observed that in excavating the grave several bones had been dug up, which the sexton had, with some care, collected together, and these, by his order, were, when the grave was filled up, laid upon the coffin of the deceased. While waiting until Ned had fulfilled his office, Henry observed, "That it was sufficiently evident that there had been some person buried in the same place." "Aye," said Ned; "and some fanciful body it has been, I'll warrant it; for luk there, as sure as we are here, he has been buried with his claes on!" Henry clearly perceived, with some astonishment, that Ned had selected some visible remains of a shoe, and a buckle, and several buttons entire. Of these, however, he did not appear to take a particular notice, as he thought it would only whet the curiosity of the sexton; and therefore, after affecting to treat his conclusions somewhat lightly, he left the place, and joined Mary Armstrong and his sister, and brother-in-law, at Arlecdon.

By the complete redemption of his solemn pledge to Ellen Anderson, Henry felt that intolerable burden which had so long pressed upon his mind, considerably lightened; and happy in the company and affections of Mary Armstrong, the two succeeding days seemed to fly on halcyon wings. Even his curiosity respecting the legacy he had so strangely acquired was so far obliterated, that he had more than half a mind to let the packet remain unopened, lest its perusal should tend to revive those painful sensations which he had endured for the last few days. "Why," said he, as he pressed the hand of Mary, "should we hazard a second chance of anticipating any unpleasant sensation? Are we not now happy? and why should we risk our present prospects through idle curiosity? What does the history of Ellen Anderson concern any living being, except old Will Fletcher? or what is the lamented decease of Mrs. Steele to us? We could not prevent her death, and if, which in spite of all that has so strangely fallen out I will not believe, our own doom be fixed, we cannot fly from it. No, Mary! one day you will be mine, mine only, till we are separated by death; and I am fully satisfied. No idle stories, or superstitious omens shall then mar our happiness; we will,—nay sister you need not laugh at me!—we will live so, that if happiness is denied us here, we will again meet, and be for ever happy hereafter." "Upon my word, brother, let you alone for a true lover. A most touching rhapsody, truly. Ellen Anderson's story of her own remarkable life is nothing to you! You will believe nothing, but what suits you to believe; and you will be happy in dispute of any interruptions! However I cannot help owning that the last part of your pretty effusion is by far the wisest; and, therefore, if you will begin again, you will probably do better on a second trial; otherwise I will not be a willing listener, for as you have no desire to keep the papers, I will go and endeavour to amuse myself with them." "Pshaw, sisters; you forget those times when Edward Wilson used to come a wooing to you. I have promised Walter a sight

or hearing of the document you allude to, and as I will not be laughed at by any of you, I will, when he visits us, read its contents myself." This determination he was soon called upon to put in practice. Walter came agreeably to his appointment, and was sufficiently anxious to hear the contents of the documents, which Henry having unfolded, commenced reading as follows.

In committing to paper a brief detail of the principal events of a life almost wholly unfortunate, the writer is quite uncertain whether the memorial she thus meditates will ever meet the eye of any of those few to whom the remembrance of Ellen Anderson can be connected with one thought of pity, or one feeling of regret; for it is long, very long, since she could claim a friend upon earth. Should this ever prove to be the case, it will not be until this world, its hopes and fears, its pleasures and misfortunes, will be alike indifferent to her. Her motive, therefore, as far as regards herself, is the indulgence of that mournful recollection of him she loved, which is yet pleasing, as it serves to sooth her mind by the conviction that she was once beloved; and as far as regards others, the consolatory hope that the tale of her sorrows may amuse and instruct those to whom she may be finally indebted for the rites of Christian burial. To these reasons, likewise, may be added the melancholy amusement of retracing and recording the remembrance of events long since passed away, and nearly unknown; the cherished idea that all memory of the dead cannot wholly perish with them; and the reflection that such relative knowledge should, in justice to those whom it concerns, be founded only in truth. Fully convinced that if the existence of such a memorial was known with certainty to be in her possession, it would soon be wrested from her; and feeling unwilling to trust it to other hands, while yet capable of retaining it, she firmly relies that He "from whom justice, mercy, and righteousness, alone proceedeth," and who hath hitherto graciously afforded her protection and safety, will preserve it from the grasp of those who wish for its suppression. It is under these impressions that she commences the following narrative. It will, doubtless, in many places be tinged with unerring marks of those calamities which, at intervals, so dreadfully affect the understanding of the writer, but it is nevertheless genuine and authentic; for although it is as long since the fingers of the writer have been employed in their once pleasing and accustomed occupation, as it is since her mind was, by continued misfortunes, rendered incapable of profiting by it, yet while the characters traced by the one, are stamped by the fatal truths which are so indelibly impressed upon the other, its accuracy cannot be impugned by the want of that polish, which, at another time, and under different circumstances, the writer might possibly have given it.

I was born in the city of London, during the troublesome and eventful reign of the second Charles. As my father was a merchant of some consequence and reputation, I received all those advantages of education which are considered necessary or useful for an only and favourite child, apparently the heir of a very considerable fortune. My father was, during that period, a striking example how unexpectedly industry and application, joined to a series of favourable cir-

cumstances, will sometimes advance the fortunate individuals to whom they relate to a much higher station in the grade of riches and polished society than the most sanguine disposition could previously anticipate with any reasonable prospect of success. He was born in this part of Cumberland, about the middle of the sixteenth century, and was, in the tenth year of his age, left to the mercy and humanity of the parish his parents belonged to, a forlorn and destitute orphan; and to this circumstance, the most degrading and unpromising in the pale of civilized life, the rise of his future fortune was principally to be attributed. The few household effects his widowed mother left behind her scarcely produced a sum sufficient to pay the expenses of her funeral; and my father was led from the grave of his remaining parent, to the dwelling of the overseer of the parish of Cleator, who, fortunately for him, happened at that time to be John Crosby, of Hingery How. As he had during his infancy been inured to the performance of such trifling errands as tended to contribute towards the support of his mother and himself, the little menial offices which were intrusted to his care in his new habitation were performed with such care and diligence as tended to install him in the good graces of his master and mistress, whose mutual good-will freely admitted him not only to be a partaker of the instruction which they themselves endeavoured to impart to their own children, but even, when leisure permitted, sent him along with them across the common to Jacktrees, where an aged parishioner, who was well qualified for the situation, undertook the charge of perfecting the youngsters in the neighbourhood, in reading, writing, and accounts; and as he had, from his infancy, been carefully taught by his own parents, such was the proficiency he made under this tuition during the opportunities thus afforded him that before he had completed his fifteenth year, he had imbibed all the knowledge he could derive from so confined a source. It chanced about that time, that Mr. Richard Crosby, an uncle of his master's, and who was at that time the surviving partner of a small mercantile concern in London, came down to visit Cumberland, of which he was a native; and calling upon his nephew, their discourse happened to turn upon my father, who was then a tall healthy looking lad, and who still continued to perform the drudgery befitting his age and situation, although the knowledge he had acquired had often made him earnestly long for the hour when he could, without incurring the charge of ingratitude, take leave of his kind master, and endeavour to turn his small stock of learning to some better account than driving carts, or the plough, herding cattle, or minding pigs. The merchant having probed the extent of his acquirements and qualifications, thought he might prove an acquisition to him, as the generality of extensive tradesmen in large towns are often more willing to place necessary confidence in young men well recommended from the country, than in those brought up in the place; and his kind master making no great objection, my father eagerly seized this favourable opportunity of entirely altering the manner of his services. In the course of a few years, such was his industry and application, that the merchant, owing to the increase of some infirmities to which

he was subject, made no hesitation to intrust the whole management of his concerns to him; nor did his kindness stop here, for finding that a mutual inclination, founded on esteem for each other, had strengthened into affection between his only surviving child and Thomas Anderson, the poor orphan whom his nephew had brought up for charity, but now grown up to a steady, active, and handsome young man, he made no objection to their union; and dying soon after, left them in full possession of his whole property. My father being of an adventurous turn of mind, and fortune still continuing to favour him, he soon considerably extended his business and profits; and to divert his mind from the loss of my mother, which happened in the twelfth year of my age, and which was the first misfortune or trouble of any consequence I remember, he paid a visit to that part of his native county where his old master and first benefactor still resided, and finding the estate was offered for sale, he made a purchase both of it and the adjoining property of Crowgarth. This, however, proved the very acme of his prosperity; for on his return to London, he found that his confidential clerk, in whom he reposed almost unlimited confidence, had availed himself of the opportunity which his absence afforded, to embezzle and decamp with a large sum of money, which my father was never afterwards able to recover; and, as if the tide of success which had hitherto attended all his undertakings had completely ebbed with the first adverse change of circumstances, the current of good fortune now flowed so decidedly against him, that in the course of five or six years his property was so reduced that his expectations of preserving his credit, which had, of course, decreased with his prosperity, entirely depended upon the success of two large vessels, then trading to the Western Indies, in which he had ventured the principal part of his shattered fortune; and in consequence of one of those unlucky oversights peculiar to a continued run of ill luck, he had insured his concerns in these vessels from the danger of the seas generally, without specifying any particulars, as the country was not, at that time, engaged in any foreign war. This proved his ultimate ruin: the ships were both taken by the Buccaneers, and after mortgaging his household, and small landed property, to maintain an action at law for the recovery of the insurance, the case, either owing to the words of the bond, or some informality, was finally decided against him; and this decision reduced him to a state of comparative beggary. As his credit as a merchant was now irretrievable, his longer continuance in London was out of the question. A spirit naturally high and independent, and rendered still more so by a long series of good fortune, was not so reduced by the change as to accept of any employment from those whom he had been accustomed to regard as equals or inferiors; and therefore no other alternative presenting itself, he was compelled to seek a final refuge in Cumberland, but under circumstances how different from his last visit! Then he was in possession of a handsome fortune which was daily accumulating; and, as an affair of comparative insignificance, had, merely to indulge the caprice of the moment, made a purchase of that property which now, considerably involved, was to furnish him with the scanty means of subsistence! Although this great and unexpected reverse of fortune

preyed deeply upon the mind of my father, he was not altogether cast down by it; for he could still comfort himself with the reflection that neither his prudence nor integrity had ever been called in question. "Come, my daughter," said he, cheerfully, on our arrival at Whitehaven, "though this change is unwelcome, it may nevertheless prove salutary; and were it not for your sake I should not so much mind it. But though the thought that I have been the immediate means of dissipating that fortune which you had so much right to expect from your grandfather is undoubtedly a bitter one, yet as He whose infinite wisdom governs all things, and to whom I can conscientiously appeal for the rectitude of my intentions, has ordained it otherwise, we must submit with patience. We may still, by our own industry, obtain the means of support; and if that bread is sweetest which is earned by our own labour, so is that labour calculated to give it the highest relish which is the means of producing it. To me it will be but a recurrence to habits which even yet seem familiar to me; but to you the change is great indeed, and can, I fear, have nothing but novelty to recommend it; yet if it be the will of heaven, your life may glide as free from care, from sorrow, or temptations of any kind, in this poor retirement, as when surrounded by riches and attendants in the greatest city upon earth. Come, then, if our present situation be not so desirable as we once hoped and expected, we will not aggravate it by endeavouring 'to kick against the pricks,' but with that fortitude and resignation which distinguishes all true Christians, let us at least welcome it as becomes us." For my own part, the indulgence and affection with which he had always treated me, had made me love him so entirely, that the idea of being able to contribute to his peace of mind so completely absorbed every other consideration, that I could with truth assure him that if he could be content, I would be perfectly satisfied; and that as my happiness and protection depended entirely upon him, I regarded that wealth which had departed from us as nothing, when compared with the satisfaction I derived from the reflection that he was still spared to me; and although the change was indeed great between the past and our future prospects, yet I trusted and hoped that I could, without repining, learn to accommodate myself to that state of mind and manners which suited with our present humble fortune.

In this fitting and mutual frame of mind, my father began to exert his usual talents and activity in arranging the little property he had still left, agreeably to the pursuit of that mode of life which he was thus necessitated to adopt. He sold Hingery How to pay off the mortgage upon the two tenements; and borrowing the necessary sum upon Crowgarth, he commenced the cultivation of it himself. John Crosby, with whom he had before lived, was now dead, but one of his sons of the same name, and nearly about the age of my father, yet occupied Hingery How; and owing to their youthful intimacy, and the kindness which had always subsisted between them, he willingly gave us all the assistance and information within his power respecting our new manner of living; and as he had but one child, (a daughter, of nearly the same age, and christened name, as myself) the family friendship extended with even accumulated force to their

children; and for the course of about two years our happiness was mutual and uninterrupted, excepting what arose from casual retrospections of the past. My blooming and sprightly friend and companion taught me those necessary domestic acquirements befitting our present situation, in all of which she had been carefully instructed by her mother; and I, in my turn, became her preceptress in reading, writing, and needlework; in the last of which I passed a great part of my time, being readily supplied with sufficient employment in that branch from the neighbouring town of Whitehaven. A constant routine of useful and varied exercise will generally ensure a moderate degree of contentment; and for my own part, my new avocations in a little time began so insensibly to eradicate the remembrance of former pleasures, that I became fully reconciled to my situation, and ceased to regret those days of unclouded prosperity, which seemed, in all probability, to have flown for ever.

The succeeding year was one pregnant with several events which had afterwards a considerable influence upon my future destiny. My fair companion Ellen Crosby had contracted an intimacy with a young man of the name of Alfred Clementson, by trade a carpenter; and as his visits became frequent, he was occasionally accompanied by Richard Robinson, who was then engaged as clerk in the principal mercantile establishment in Whitehaven; and my first acquaintance with this young man was soon succeeded by a mutual partiality which quickly ripened into love. As neither Ellen Crosby's admirer nor mine made any secret of their attachment, there was not any occasion to practice that disguise which often attends a rural courtship; for as both of the young men were equal in character, and superior in worldly concerns to what we could reasonably expect, no objection was made by either of our parents to the projected alliance; and thus blessed with health, and happy in the affection of him I first loved, I had reason to indulge in golden anticipations of the future. But, alas! such prospects too often prove visionary and deceitful; the pleasure naturally arising from this circumstance was nearly counterbalanced by the now precarious state of my father. His long and habitual manner of passing his time in his own countinghouse had rendered his constitution unable to contend with the frigid severity of that colder atmosphere to which the pursuit of his agricultural occupations constantly exposed him, and he was seized with such severe and incessant rheumatic attacks, that he was obliged to remain principally within doors; and the expenses attending this restriction, and the leisure it afforded him for brooding over his past misfortunes, soon rendered him dangerously ill. Our situation was now indeed worse than ever; my time was fully occupied in attending to the wants of my parent, our concerns were intrusted to the care of a hired domestic, and our property decreased accordingly. The hopes we occasionally entertained of my father's ultimate recovery were, after a few months' confinement, at length totally abandoned by the doctor's declaring that all his expectations of a successful termination were now entirely relinquished.

Why should I dwell upon the agonizing suspense I endured during the few remaining days which my father lived? Although I still

remember with gratitude the many reasons I had to be thankful for all the alleviations which my situation admitted of. The whole of our kind neighbours were unremitting in their endeavours to relieve and comfort me; my friend passed the greatest part of her time with us; and my lover, as well as Alfred Clementson, testified their regard for me, and their respect for my father, by attentively seizing every opportunity to visit us which their own business permitted; and by relieving me from the necessity of almost continually reading to, or, when his strength permitted, of conversing with him, contributed all in their power to diminish my load of suffering. This universal kindness tended, no doubt, partly to sooth the anguish of my mind, but still the idea of being for ever separated upon earth from an indulgent and only remaining parent, is, to an otherwise destitute child, a sufficient portion of mental misery to any susceptible mind. That hour at length approached; and amidst the overwhelming tide of subsequent evils it has never yet been long absent from my memory. It was upon one of those nights when my lover only was present with us, and my father, as if fully sensible of his approaching dissolution, for the first time since his illness turned the conversation upon our attachment. "Richard Robinson," said he, faintly, "mine has indeed been a chequered life! I have tasted largely of both joy and sorrow, and perhaps, upon the whole, I have no great reason to complain, for 'naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return to that earth from which I sprung.' For my own part, though racked with pains, and harassed by misfortunes, I have remembered that source from whence they came, and have never breathed one impious murmur: yet still I cannot forget her whom I must soon leave behind me equally destitute and unprotected. There is, as my papers will fully inform you, an enquiry now pending concerning the property and capture of the two vessels which occasioned my final ruin. The pirates have since been destroyed; and there appears to be a certainty that the government will of itself make some restitution for that merchandise, the loss of which was partly owing to their own culpable neglect. I once cherished the hope, that notwithstanding the then seeming inequality of your expectations, I might live to witness you vested with a title to protect her which even supersedes that of a parent; and latterly I had ventured to indulge the expectation that I possibly might have the additional pleasure of presenting her to you with such a sum, as joined to your own fortune and industry, would, with the permission of Providence, have placed you in a state of comparative affluence. That, however, I feel I must never see; yet the assurance of your continued mutual regard would, even at this time, tend to diminish my anxiety for the future welfare of the only pledge left me by one whom I am about shortly to rejoin in the world of spirits." "Mr. Anderson," replied my lover, instantly pressing my hand with his own, "if my assurances can, in any degree, sooth your mind respecting my wishes and intentions, I can have no reason for withholding them. Should you, therefore, be prematurely removed from us, I swear by him who created us all, that I will, in behalf of Ellen, use my utmost endeavours to procure for her every advantage which results either from the pending

investigation, or any other cause whatever; and whether I be successful or otherwise, it shall not affect those promises which, I am happy to say, at present subsist between us; and heaven so deal with me as I mean to fulfil the promises which I now make." "Then," said my father, "draw yet nearer to me my children. Yes, to your care I bequeath her; albeit my blessing will be perhaps the only portion you will ever receive with her; and to you and Alfred Clementson I intrust the arrangement of my concerns; for some will be unavoidably necessary. And now, my daughter, the only care which hung upon my departing spirit is removed, and I can say, with the pious and inspired evangelist, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The pleasing sensations which thrilled through his mind appeared to overpower him, his head dropped upon the pillow, his eyes closed, and before we had time to recover from our surprise at this sudden change, he was gone for ever.

The changes which immediately succeeded, though important to me, were, nevertheless, such as the reader, (should this manuscript ever come into the possession of a friendly one), will naturally expect. The whole of the property was sold, and every demand against my father was carefully investigated and settled, so that the small residue which remained, I could call my own clear of any encumbrance whatever; and as Crowgarth was purchased by the adjoining proprietor of Jacktrees, I still continued to reside in the same dwelling which we had inhabited since our settlement in Cumberland.

Another year elapsed; the investigation proceeded but slowly; and, with some difficulty, I prevailed upon my lover, (with whom I had every reason to be satisfied), to defer our marriage until after its termination. My dear Ellen had no such reasons to urge, and had already given her hand to Alfred Clementson; but though pressed to join them in Whitehaven, I felt reluctant to quit the roof under which I had resided with my beloved parent; and as the servant who had lived with us at the time of his decease was retained by John Crosby, who now rented the ground we had occupied, in addition to that which he before held, she generally passed the evening, and slept with me. Unhappily, before the close of the year, John Crosby had some difference with his landlord, and quitting both tenements at the term, he was succeeded by a farmer of the name of Brown; and as Grace Foster seemed unwilling to leave me, I, with the consent of my lover, determined to keep her, as I had sufficient employment for myself, and Brown had already offered to find her work whenever she was at leisure to attend to it.

In this state of affairs another year—a year, indeed, fraught with events which terminated in irretrievable calamities, commenced. Early in the spring of 1710, my lover received intelligence from London that his uncle, the hereditary proprietor of Scaelands, was dangerously ill, and that as his recovery was hopeless, it was the opinion of the writer that a prudent regard for his own interest imperiously demanded his immediate presence, as it was generally rumoured that the woman with whom he had cohabited for some time had left no means untried to secure the greatest part of his property to herself;

insomuch that she had, since his illness, endeavoured to prevent all communication between him and his friends in the country. The propriety of this advice was too apparent to admit of any dispute; and after receiving the necessary authority for empowering him to act in my behalf respecting the pending investigation which was soon expected to close, he took an affectionate farewell of me, and departed for London.

Notwithstanding he lost no time in availing himself of the well-meant advice he had received, his uncle was dead some hours before he arrived; and those about him had so far profited by the absence of his undisputed heir, that nearly all his personal property had disappeared, and as his papers had been made away with, all attempts to recover any part of it were altogether fruitless; but Richard Robinson, as the only descendant of his younger brother, of course succeeded to his estate at Scalelands; and as this was the whole of what he had reckoned upon for some time, he felt little disappointment at the circumstances. Indeed, his uncle's dying without a will bore much harder upon my neighbour Brown, whose family, descended from a sister of my lover's grandfather, were, next to him, the nearest heirs; although Brown's younger brother, Robert, who had preceded Richard Robinson to London, was evidently concerned in pilfering away the personal property of his relation, which was considerable, and who, soon after his decease, returned to Cumberland, where he was joined by the same person with whom his great uncle had lived for some years; while my lover remained to await the result of my concerns, which were not finally settled till the close of the summer.

During this period I constantly received the most affectionate letters from my intended husband, which while they minutely detailed the progress of the business in which he was engaged, and held out confident hopes of as favourable a termination as we could possibly expect, always contained the warmest expressions of undiminished love. But why should I revert to the anticipation of that happiness which then seemed to await me? The impatience they express—the promises they contained—and the reciprocal pledges of mutual fidelity which passed between us, served but to render more poignant the bitter misery which succeeded; and the recollection, even at this distance, creates my astonishment, by remaining a living monument of what the human heart can endure without breaking.

The behaviour of my confidential servant and companion, Grace Foster, began about this time to awaken my suspicion that some mischief was impending, but of what kind I could not thoroughly comprehend. Mary Brown's maiden name was Fletcher, and her brother, who was so well known by the name of the Giant of Cringle Gill, frequently came to visit them, and I had discovered that there was some secret correspondence subsisting between him and my maid. Of this I had acquainted my friend Ellen and her husband, as it was a circumstance not altogether desirable, owing to the general character of William Fletcher, which was by no means favourable; although, from casual observation, I had never witnessed anything improper in his behaviour, which was, on the contrary, more affable and modest than that of the generality of country rustics of a similar degree,

whom I occasionally chanced to meet in public companies; and in this opinion Alfred Clementson coincided. He was, indeed, looked upon as the most professed champion and daring freebooter of that day; yet still, as no particular instance of private insult or robbery had been laid to his charge, I apprehended no danger to myself from the connexion; but finding my endeavours to put an end to their frequent interviews entirely fruitless, I told her, that as my own affairs would soon be adjusted, I would probably either settle at Whitehaven, or might, when married, eventually remove to Scalelands, she was not to consider herself my servant longer than Whitsuntide; for if I determined upon the first alternative, I would not want her, and in case of the latter, I would no longer be my own mistress. She appeared to acquiesce in the propriety of this decision, and, when the term arrived, seemed perfectly content with our settlement, but still remained at Crowgarth with James Brown.

Every succeeding letter from Richard was now expected to contain the final result of the long suspended investigation, and the welcome intelligence of his speedy return. It had been agreed that he should receive whatever dividend might be allowed, and, after our marriage, either enter into some business at Whitehaven, or after expending a part of it in improving his estate, settle in the country. The tidings at length arrived that the dividend, my share of which amounted to upwards of five hundred pounds, was actually paid, and that I need not attempt to reply to his letter, for he expected to be at Crowgarth in the course of ten days from that date.

This was about the middle of July, 1710. From the time that Grace Foster had quitted my service up to this period, she had slept with me as usual when at home, but I had latterly spent a good deal of my time at Whitehaven. However, upon the receipt of Richard's last letter, I left Whitehaven to prepare for his arrival at Hingery How, from a kind of reverential, or rather, superstitious desire I felt, which induced me to wait his return at the place where he had taken his parting farewell of me, and where my father had so solemnly confided me to his protection. Under this impression I remained at Hingery How, notwithstanding the very disagreeable situation in which I found myself placed. Will Fletcher was constantly at Crowgarth; and I soon found that my former servant minutely watched all my most trivial proceedings, and that during my absence all my letters had been looked through, and the only drawer I kept locked, broken open. Nothing, however, was missing; the money I possessed was probably too trifling to be worth while taking, as such a circumstance would have awakened my suspicion, and caused my immediate removal before their schemes could have taken ample effect; and in this state of anxiety I remained till I saw and heard enough to determine me to change my residence without further delay; but, such was the will of heaven, the warning unhappily came too late for me to profit by it.

The twenty-sixth day of the month arrived; it was the expiration of that term which Richard had assigned for his return. I had, in the course of the afternoon, gone over to Jacktrees, and did not return till towards the close of the evening. The wind whistled at intervals through the surrounding plaintrees, and the lowering clouds per-

tended an approaching storm. On reaching the door of my own dwelling, I plainly distinguished the sound of human voices in one of the outhouses which was in the occupation of Brown, and the mention of my lover's name, pronounced with some vehemence, instinctively attracting my curiosity, I cautiously drew near to the place from whence the noise seemed to proceed, and discovered Grace Foster and her sweetheart in close conference. She seemed very reluctant to engage in something which he was proposing to her, but as their conversation proceeded, a very little time served to convince me, that as she was already the victim of his artifices, the power he possessed over her would ultimately overcome all her conscientious scruples. "I tell thee, Grace," said he, "that it must be done. The money he brings with him shall be ours. Rob Brown has good reason enough both to assist and sit quiet, and the Scalelands estate is a sufficient reward for my sister's husband; therefore, I tell thee, if we miss him upon the road, do as I have directed thee." I waited to hear no more, but for fear of being discovered listening, hastened into my own house.

What could I do? The day was gone, and the storm had already commenced. The dreadful words I had heard uttered by Will Fletcher still rung in my ears; but for myself I feared not. The destined blow was levelled at another breast as dear to me as my own, but should he arrive upon that dreadful night I knew not how to avert it. What would I not have given to have hastened the arrival of another day! Then I could have framed some excuse, if any had been necessary, and his friend Alfred Clementson would have taken measures to have insured his safety. But, alas! that wish was unavailing; and should I then leave the place, and Richard arrive during my absence, it was too probable that his doom would be sealed, all silent and unobserved. All my hopes, therefore, rested upon the uncertainty of his coming, which was somewhat augmented by the storm, which then raged with unrelenting severity. The behaviour of Grace Forster, who was not long in joining me, was not calculated to dissipate my alarm. She was unusually silent, and often threw a timid and sorrowful glance alternately towards the door and window, as if conscious of being watched; and then bent her tearful and dejected looks upon me. In this comfortless and disconsolate manner we passed the evening. Our wonted bedtime came, but neither seemed disposed to pay any regard to it. The storm still raged with unceasing fury. The clock chimed ten. "He is safe," said I, mentally, "for he will not, cannot, come this night." My fears had begun to abate, when suddenly the rapid and successive discharge of two pistols, followed by the appalling and terrific cry of, "Villain, thou hast murdered me!" was heard above the noise of the raging elements. I knew the tones of that voice too well to be deceived, and started on my feet in indescribable agony. The door burst suddenly open, and is it possible that ages could drown the remembrance of that dreadful moment? The form of my murdered lover, besmeared with dirt and blood, and holding in each hand those weapons which had failed to ensure his safety, rushed into my arms. Can I forget the dagger, that dagger, once the property of my father, but now stolen

by my deluded servant to further the dark designs of her seducer, which the murderer had planted in the breast of his victim? The calm, yet agonizing, expression of his countenance alternately struggling with the pangs of approaching dissolution, and the consciousness of meeting a fate so horrible and unexpected at such a moment! Or the words which the desperate resolution of the speaker alone rendered audible. "Ellen, I die, die, at the time when life was most desirable. The person of my murderer was too remarkable to escape my notice. It was Will Fletcher who dealt the fatal blow; but there were others.—" Further utterance was denied him; he fixed his dying eyes for one moment upon my own, and then closed them for ever. A scene so dreadful was too much for a young and unprotected female to sustain without shrinking, and I sunk down as insensible as the dead body of my lover, which, as I could no longer support, fell beside me.

Upon my recovery, I found myself lying upon my own bed, and Grace Foster assiduously employed in endeavouring to restore me to my recollection. The memory of the past instantly recurred to my imagination with all its attendant horrors; and strengthened by the frenzy created by my own bewildered ideas, I rushed down the stairs in despite of all the efforts of my companion to detain me. The body of him I had so fondly loved was not yet removed; the floor of the apartment was covered with his blood, and by the fire stood the gigantic murderer, accompanied by his accomplice Robert Brown. "Villains," cried I, "complete your work of destruction by the death of another victim; or I will stir heaven and earth to assist me in avenging him." Never will I forget the demoniac smile which glanced over the distorted countenance of Brown as he replied, "You are raving, Miss Anderson, and well you may. Your lover returned and found you in the arms of my brother-in-law; and being disappointed in his attempts to revenge himself, he plunged his own dagger into his breast. See, here are his pistols recently discharged, and there is the dagger your father gave him upon the day of his decease yet sticking in the wound." I instantly perceived the dilemma to which they intended to reduce me, and the seeming impossibility, circumstanced as I was, to refute any story they might think it their interests to advance; and the villains perceiving the impression their diabolical assertion had made upon me, left me to the care of their female accomplice, after cautioning me to be wise, if I respected my fame, and agree to the proposal she was instructed to offer me.

The proposals which Grace Foster conjured me to accept, if I valued my life and reputation, were, to swear that I would never disclose to any person living that I had ever seen Richard Robinson since he departed for London; and on this condition they would return me a part of my money, bury the body where I chose, and I should be at full liberty either to remain where I was, or remove to any other place at my own option. The murderers allowed me very little time for consideration, and their looks fully indicated what measures were resolved upon in case of my refusal. Thus surrounded, what resource was left me but a partial compliance with their terms? I

would have been content to die rather than have held any communion with his murderers, could I have previously revealed to any person what I had witnessed, or the alternative to which I was reduced ; but thus to die, unfriended, and unpitied, with the consciousness of leaving my character to the mercy of such an unprincipled gang, was more than my nature was capable of ; and the idea which then possessed me, that an oath under such circumstances could not be conscientiously binding, induced me to temporize. The villain, Brown, dictated the oath which I was obliged to swear upon the sacred volume ; and the absolute necessity that existed for removing the body, was urged as a plea which rendered a speedy determination indispensable.

I had stipulated that he should be buried in consecrated ground, and to this they immediately assented ; influenced, as I afterwards found, by the following circumstance. An Irish servant, who lived in the neighbourhood of Arlecdon, had died after a few days' illness, occasioned by drinking cold water when heated, and had been interred there on that very day ; and Will Fletcher had actually contracted with the surgeon who had been called to attend him, for his body, which, of course, it was necessary to disinter. He therefore resolved to fulfil his infamous agreement, and place the body of Richard Robinson in the grave destined for the unfortunate Irishman ; and, accordingly, after carefully wrapping the remains of the former in a large sheet to prevent any traces of blood, he prepared to remove it on horseback to the church-yard. I know not by what means I acquired that strength and resolution which enabled me to struggle through the fatigues and horrors of that dreadful night. The storm had subsided ; the moon was shining in diminished splendour ; and afraid that they meant to deceive me, I insisted upon going with them ; and Grace Foster, as if to atone for the part she had acted, brought one of her master's horses, upon which she accompanied me. Our journey was not very long. We waited till the corpse of the unfortunate stranger was disinterred, and that of my more unfortunate lover laid in its place. What followed further I know not ; my companion lost no time in returning homewards, and I, in course, accompanied her.

It was evident upon our arrival that James Brown was, and had been, accessory to the whole transaction. All traces of the blood of the man who stood between him and the estate which he coveted had been carefully obliterated from the inside of the house ; and, doubtless, no pains were spared in removing every vestige calculated to awaken the least suspicion from thence to the place where the fatal struggle had taken place ; and Brown had even the additional caution to slaughter a sheep for the use of his family, among the trees which sheltered the buildings, the very next morning. In the course of that day a message came from Ellen Clementson desiring to know if Richard had arrived, as her husband had been informed that morning that he was spoken with the preceding night when passing through Egremont, and that his lameness, owing to an accident which had befallen him the preceding day, had alone prevented Alfred from coming to Crowgarth. Brown himself intercepted the messenger, and told him

in return, that they had heard no tidings of the person he inquired after, and that I was somewhat indisposed, but intended coming to Whitehaven on the succeeding day. Notwithstanding this excessive caution, the report of Richard Robinson's return grew stronger every hour. He had likewise been accidentally met in the village of Cleator by one who knew him well, and whose veracity was unquestionable, when an unfortunate coinciding catastrophe gave quite another turn to the rumour.

That friend who had given my unfortunate lover the information which occasioned his abrupt departure for London thought a visit to Cumberland might conduce towards the re-establishment of his own health, which was rather impaired by long and close confinement in so large a town; and in consequence of that opinion, had accompanied his friend as far as Liverpool; but upon their arrival, having ascertained that the trader between that port and Whitehaven was not expected to sail in less than three or four days, he remained there to try what effect sea sickness might produce during the short run between those two places, while his impatient companion pursued his journey by land. Previous, however, to their parting, Richard, intending to walk the greatest part of the road, intrusted part of his, or rather my money, and the whole of his superfluous luggage to the care of his friend, who, of course, deposited them in his trunk amongst his own effects. The vessel sailed at the appointed time; but the same storm amidst which the one perished by the dagger of the assassin, consigned the other to a death almost equally as terrible and untimely. The ship was stranded among the sands near Ravenglass; and the greatest part of the crew, and nearly all the passengers perished, and amongst others, the unfortunate friend of the equally unfortunate Richard Robinson. An account of this catastrophe soon reached Whitehaven. The trunk containing my own and my lover's papers was amongst the articles saved from the wreck; and as the only person who could have satisfactorily explained that circumstance was no more, it was generally supposed that Richard Robinson was one of the devoted victims to the "pelting of the pitiless storm." After this melancholy occurrence, the assertions of those who persevered in declaring they had seen him were met by the conflicting opinions of their auditors; some urged the improbability of the circumstance, others the liability of mistake at his appearance at such a time at night; and a third hinted, that as the accident happened about the time of his appearance, it was his dissatisfied wraith wandering towards the property which had lately become his own. These, and similar reasons, occasioned the belief of his return to grow fainter every day. His friends in general made no doubt of his having perished along with the companion of his journey; and, for my own part, after maturely weighing every circumstance of his death, and considering the oath I had taken, and the little chance I had to procure the conviction of his murderers, I concluded that as his remains were resting in hallowed earth, and it was very uncertain what weight would be attached to my unsupported testimony when balanced against the corroborated evidence of others, it was my wisest plan to affect to believe the same.

Guilty minds, though naturally timid and suspicious, are seldom very scrupulous in regard to those promises which are intended to assist their own designs ; on the contrary that inherent dishonesty which stimulates them to the achievement of one, frequently prompts them to neglect the other ; at least this was the case with Brown and Fletcher. What property they found about the person of their victim they retained unmolested ; for I felt as if a participation in the property, though my own, was, by such a compromise with his murderers, a kind of tacit acquiescence in their guilt. This was not the case with respect to the money found in the trunk ; for as the sum confided to its late owner's care was noted down amongst his accounts, and found carefully wrapped up in a separate paper, his friends returned it to me without hesitation, and thus placed me beyond the prospect of immediate want. The major part of this sum I lent to Alfred Clementson ; and regardless of my own safety, and more than ever averse to mixing with the world, I experienced a melancholy satisfaction in brooding privately over my sorrows ; and so much did I indulge in that self-gratification, that in despite of the remonstrances of my friends, I continued to reside under the same roof wherein I had witnessed the final departure, and heard the last words of him whom I had best loved, even after Crowgarth was left tenantless, and I, all lone and unprotected, was the sole inhabitant of both places. Thus buried in solitude, and unconnected with all around, I became subject to those wild and gloomy transitions of the mind which tend to cloud the knowledge and remembrance of the present, by continually reverting to the past, and pondering upon the future.

In the midst of these temporary aberrations of mind, a wild and stormy winter approached ; while, equally lost to every idea of personal comfort or danger, I still refused to quit that gloomy retreat which was the arena of departed joys and accumulated sorrows. During the wildest and most appalling hour of midnight did I often wander among the surrounding trees, and while the wind raved through their leafless branches, how often did I frequently seek that identical place where my unfortunate lover received his death wound ? and then returning to my lonely couch, how often, amidst the broken and terrific slumbers which these gloomy visits occasioned, did I witness the repetition of that cruel and diabolical tragedy, which thus became too strongly impressed on my mind for an age of futurity to eradicate. But why should I dwell upon the complicated misery which inevitably resulted from the recent remembrance of anticipated hopes, so soon converted into the irrevocable depths of the most cheerless despair.

Throughout the winter this misanthropical train of comfortless reflection was only interrupted by the necessary visits of my landlord at Jacktrees, who had, since the departure of Brown, united the two tenements to his own ; and who, in return for the services I continued to render him, suffered me to live on unmolested, and supplied me with milk and other trifling necessities ; or by the occasional presence of Ellen or Alfred Clementson, who still continued their solicitations for me to join them in Whitehaven ; but early in the ensuing spring, I was surprised by the unexpected appearance of Grace Foster, who had ventured to pay me a visit at the risk of her life.

My landlord had told me that Brown had taken possession of, and was settled at Scalelands; but Grace now informed me that he had let it to a man of the name of Wilson, who lived at Winder, and was himself upon the point of removing to Stockhow. In answer to my inquiries respecting the seeming strangeness of his conduct, she looked timidly around her, and then asked me how I durst venture to dwell in that dreadful place alone? This roused my curiosity; and by degrees she told me all that had happened to her since she quitted me; but strange and incredible seemed her tale! She averred that during the whole winter her master was never suffered to rest throughout the night; that fearful and unaccountable noises were frequently heard by the whole family; that the ghastly apparition of a murdered man had been seen wandering round the premises at midnight; and that Brown's sole reason for removal, was the hope of getting clear of these unwelcome intrusions. This story she desired me never to repeat, as Wilson was either ignorant or regardless of its truth; but if the circumstance once became public there was no judging of the consequences. She further confessed to me that Fletcher had seduced, and now wished to forsake her; but she was nevertheless meaning to accompany his brother-in-law to Stockhow.

This story was not calculated to soothe the anxiety of my mind; yet still, so familiarized had I become with the cherished remembrance of his misfortunes, with the appalling reflection that (if Grace Foster's story was true) the dissatisfied spirit of my unfortunate lover still hovered around the confines of this world, did not, in the least, diminish my love of solitude; but, on the contrary, roused within me the dreadful and desperate desire to meet it. This may possibly be considered as a proof that the course of life I had latterly pursued had ended in affecting a total aberration of mind. But whatever may be the conclusions or opinions of the world, I myself yet think otherwise; and in corroboration of the justice of my own observation, I offer the following proof.

Not long after the removal of James Brown to Stockhow, I had, after one of my accustomed midnight rambles, during which my mind was strangely occupied with the story Grace Foster had told me, thrown myself upon my bed, and regardless of rest, I continued to ponder upon the circumstance till I insensibly dropped into a sleep, or a vision. I thought I perceived Grace Foster hanging upon the arm of the tall and terrific Giant of Cringle Gill, (for so Will Fletcher was commonly called,) who guided her steps up a lone and narrow valley, the surface of which was broken by huge masses of the shattered rock, or covered with large beds of impervious whins. The countenance of the wretched girl seemed cheerful, and was occasionally covered with an air of unwonted serenity; but the dark and gloomy brow of her seducer, was clouded with that expression which I imagined distinguished it upon the night in which he murdered my unfortunate lover. At length they seated themselves upon the brink of a small precipice formed by the projecting limestone, at the foot of which grew one of the tallest and thickest of these whin-beds with which the valley abounded. After endeavouring to fix her attention on some object partly visible by the glimmering of the dim moonlight,

he rose, and firmly grasping in his hand an unwonted implement of murder, he instantly, with one terrible blow divided the head of his unfortunate victim. The body fell amidst the crumbled fragments of the rock, and both it and the weapon he had used were completely obscured by the large and dark whin bushes and underwood which grew at the bottom of the precipice. Before I could recover from the horror and surprise which this dreadful and unexpected incident had occasioned, I thought I perceived the bloody and ghastly form of my lover, just as he appeared to me when flying from his murderers, glide across the path of the gigantic villain, who seemed to recoil with terror from the frightful phantom, and place itself by my side. But to me his presence had nothing of terror in it. A serene smile of satisfaction settled over his face, and his voice I thought still retained that softness and melody for which it had been distinguished, while thus it broke upon the solemn stillness of the midnight hour. "Ellen, though visionary to you is the scene you have just witnessed, it is nevertheless real. The bloody villain, whose days will yet be long upon the earth, hath accomplished a second murder; but in your presence never more will he willingly appear, till within the last hour of your mortal existence and therefore you have no cause to fear him or any of his accomplices; for until that time arrives, he who waits your final summons will be permitted to protect you. The hour is yet afar off. Full fifty times that moon beneath whose changing light my body, all unshrouded, was committed to its kindred clay, shall rise upon my grave, ere our spirits shall soar together to the realms of eternity. Forbear then to murmur at what Providence has ordained; wait with patience till your appointed change, and then all will be well." He ceased speaking, and immediately disappeared from my sight. I slept with unwonted tranquillity, and when I awoke, was astonished to find that the day was far advanced.

From that day forward Grace Foster was never heard of. She was a stranger in this part of Cumberland, and as she was supposed to be pregnant, it was conjectured that she had removed to her own country. As for me, I remained for thirty winters more in my old habitation, and when its ruins were scattered around me, I removed to my present habitation, where, I doubt not, I will be permitted to complete the allotted period of my days. Upon the same hour in which I witnessed the remains of my lover committed to the earth, have I annually visited his tomb; but, reader, were I disposed to reveal all the secrets of my mysterious life, little would it profit thee. The changes I have witnessed, and those secrets which have been unfolded to me, I am not permitted to tell; nor if I were, would the knowledge avail thee. Will Fletcher yet lives; but all those whom I once called my friends have preceded me to the grave. Another, and another, race have sprung up, and still I am here; but shall not be so long. The appointed change is near, and I feel anxious to leave behind me some account of my youthful years. Whether or not I shall succeed in this is hidden from me. I have for some time marked a descendant of the villain Brown loitering about my dwelling. His father is no more; and he must therefore be employed to watch me by that

hoary wretch, his maternal uncle; who, all daring and powerful as he was, chose not to remain in this neighbourhood, although he may now seek to prevent any knowledge of his crimes from reaching posterity. And who has hitherto dared to retain possession of that property upon which I once anticipated long, long years of uninterrupted happiness! But that will soon be over; after I am gone, no more will the occupiers of that dwelling tremble at the thoughts of supernatural molestation; but till the bones of that other victim of the guilty Giant of Cringle Gill are discovered, so long shall the spirit that once animated them continue to wander upon the earth.††

Reader, thou art now in possession of the principal events which distinguished my early life, those events which determined me to prefer a life of solitude and seclusion that I might, by continually bearing in remembrance the recollection of the past, be enabled to struggle through, and bring home to my mind the difficulties of the future. How far I have hitherto succeeded in doing so, I am myself the most competent witness. Although, as the knowledge of what I once was has been gradually forgotten by a younger generation, I have been branded with the name, and even been sometimes, by an ignorant and brutish rabble, treated as a witch; yet still the lonely and midnight hour has been my own; for upon such an hour no enemy to my peace has dared either to trespass upon my premises, or intrude upon my privacy. Nor have I been uniformly treated with unkindness. Though my dearest friend and her husband have long since ceased to exist; though I have since seen their children borne to the grave, yet still the friend of their grandmother has been respected by her children's children, and by many other friends whom I always remember with becoming gratitude. Another, and but one more visit to the tomb of my lover yet remains; it is my last and to-morrow I go to prove it. After it is paid, my days upon earth will not be long; my sorrows will be as if they had never been the sole means of acquiring me, shall perish with them.

Although the story of the late Ellen Anderson sufficiently explained those transactions of her early life, with which the youthful reader and the auditors of it had been hitherto entirely unacquainted, yet as it was dated previous to the acquaintance of Henry and Mary, it consequently threw no particular light upon any of these mysterious proceedings which immediately affected them. That the poor old woman seriously believed that those feverish and distempered vagaries of the mind during her hours of rest, which it was reasonable to conclude were the natural effects of that continual distempered and gloomy manner of thinking to which she had inured herself during the day, and the solitary manner in which she lived, were nothing less than infallible visions of the future, was palpable enough; that several of her predictions had been fulfilled to an extent almost miraculous was equally true; and though such ominous forebodings may be apparently disregarded by a youthful and daring, or even by a reasonable mind, yet still there is an inexplicable something attending, and an anxiety connected with them, which the boldest heart cannot altogether divest itself of. This was particularly the case with Henry Clementson; for though Walter, actively and ardently engaged both in agricultural and

the illegal pursuits of his father, spoke lightly, and actually felt incredulous respecting such powers of divination ; yet superior as he was in both bodily and mental powers, it was far otherwise with Henry, whose mind, perfectly unengaged by any particular occupation, had full leisure to cherish every impression which promised happiness, and to watch with a miser's jealousy every incident which threatened to affect it. Besides this he knew more of Ellen Anderson's latest proceedings than any other person. He had witnessed the calm and confident composure with which she received the uncertain and improbable visit of the Giant of Cringle Gill, as if fully aware both of his coming, and her reliance upon some efficient protection from his violence ; and her own firm conviction (of which this was so remarkable an instance) in the infallibility of the means by which she acquired such knowledge, had a corresponding effect upon him.

Notwithstanding these misgivings in the breast of Henry, it will not be supposed that he felt desirous of imparting them to her whom they mutually affected. On the contrary, he affected to believe (what indeed bore some appearance of reason), that granting Ellen Anderson had possessed such unerring knowledge of the future, such knowledge, could only be co-equal with her own existence ; and therefore all those predictions which extended beyond the period of her own death, were, by that event, rendered completely dubious, if not entirely nugatory ; insomuch, that as their completion could no longer affect her, it was the less reasonable to suppose that her intelligence would be suffered to reach further than what might, in some degree, prove personally interesting to herself. Upon a subject so enveloped in mystery, and concerning which no positive and convincing conclusions can be drawn from divine authority, neither Edward Wilson nor his wife was disposed to dwell ; but after acquiescing with the arguments of Walter and Henry so far as natural reason was implicated, and suggesting that the wandering and unsettled manner of living which their old and unfortunate acquaintance had, from her own account, long been subject to, might not only serve to elucidate those reports respecting the fearful and supernatural visitor in the vicinity of Sealelands, but likewise account for the truth of her assertions relative to its final disappearance, they, to the satisfaction of the whole party, contrived to change the subject. A few weeks more elapsed, the remembrance of past events became proportionably weakened, and the affairs of our lovers again seemed to resume a more favourable aspect, when a natural, though unexpected circumstance occurred, which was eventually attended with the most important results.

The chief part of Henry's property consisted of cash, which had for some time been lent to a gentleman of respectability in the neighbourhood upon his own personal security ; and this person having no longer any occasion for it, gave Henry notice of his intention to pay it against a certain and legal period, or sooner if agreeable to him. To this, of course, there could be no objections ; but it behoved Henry immediately to come to some determination respecting his future mode of life. It was true that he was firmly resolved to marry Mary Armstrong ; yet still there was something due both to worldly opinion,

as well as prudence. Such a measure was, considering their short acquaintance, and those disagreeable circumstances connected with it, neither a proof of his own wisdom, nor of her discretion; and before marriage, it was absolutely necessary to conclude upon some business or calling by which they were afterwards to subsist. It was during this state of perplexity that he happened, when over at Salter, to accompany Walter to the secret recess in the rock; he had during their walk mentioned the notice he had received respecting his money, and the discourse naturally turned upon the subject of their present journey. After a good deal of the interested arguments usually advanced in defence of smuggling, Walter, after stating some of the most respectable names which were implicated either in the private purchase or wholesale disposal of the liquor, thus abruptly addressed his companion. "Every man, Henry, has a right to please himself respecting his engagement in this lucrative commerce; but if I were in your shoes, I know what I would do with the money you spoke of a little while ago. In the course of a few nights a certain vessel will be off this coast on her annual visit to this channel. Her owner sells for ready money he will sell so low, that, if fortune be favourable, it is easy to double your cash after every expense is paid. Our gang at this time is bold, trusty, and numerous, while the officers and their followers are comparatively few and timid; and therefore the risk and difficulty is a mere bugbear. With such a man as you mention at my command, I could soon render myself independent; but you may do as you please. If you commence farmer, you may toil yourself from morning to night; perform the labour, and subject yourself to the drudgery of a brute beast, to procure a scanty subsistence—that is, if you are fortunate; and if you turn shopkeeper, your attention must be incessant, and you must say, "thank ye, Sir," to every greasy blackguard who spends a penny with you, and who perhaps may be thinking of nothing but cheating you into the bargain. But you know your own mind best. For me, were it in my power, as it is in yours, I would trade boldly; aye, and I believe honestly; give with one hand, and take with the other, and defy any man to cheat me." The fallacy of this sophistry was sufficiently apparent to Henry; but unhappily some of the sentiments of the speaker were too much in accordance with his own. Naturally high spirited, and unused to control, he had sometimes fancied Mary Armstrong, as his wife, engaged in those domestic labours which are inseparable from a country life, and his mind had not much relished the picture; and his proud and independent spirit spurned at the other portrait which Walter had so distortingly drawn. The bait was certainly tempting; it appeared to him the nearest road to affluence and happiness; and after making very particular inquiries respecting the whole business, and weighing the chances for and against its feasibility, he finally signified his consent to follow the advice of his friend to a certain extent. Nothing could be more agreeable to Walter than this determination. His father had latterly consented that he should make the next journey in his place, and the company of the friend he loved was alone wanting to make the meditated jaunt highly satisfactory. The greatest and most striking fault in Henry's dispos-

tion was a kind of sullen obstinacy which oftentimes made him consider that advice as an intrusion, which even he himself knew was well meant; and, therefore, when reproved for what was wrong, instead of acknowledging it, he would, though too proud to defend it, generally desire his catechiser to leave him to manage his own business. Upon this account Edward Wilson very seldom interfered with him, as the entire confidence and affection which subsisted between him and his amiable wife, and, indeed, generally speaking, with Henry himself, made any bickerings of whatever nature very disagreeable to him; and therefore when he found that Henry had actually taken measures to put his lately conceived designs into execution, he foresaw that a quarrel was inevitable between them; for while he conceived it to be his conduct in persevering in what he knew to be wrong, he was certain that as Henry had felt ashamed to acquaint him with his project, he was likewise too proud to retract from the pursuit of any thing which he had pledged himself to perform. These prognostications were not however verified to the extent he apprehended, when, seizing the first favourable opportunity, he thus addressed him:—"I am sorry, Henry, you thought me so little your friend as to be unworthy of consultation concerning the propriety of your engaging in the project you meditate. What advantage is it which you hope to derive from the successful accomplishment of such a pursuit? You may tell me the improvement of your fortune; a praiseworthy motive, certainly, if accomplished by legal and honourable means; but which, when attempted by schemes attended by such toil and dangers as may eventually lead you to the commission of manslaughter, which the law in such a case would call murder, is not worthy of one single consideration. Some of the gang with whom you must necessarily associate are villains of the most profligate description; and for their company you have consented to give up the station and society to which you have been accustomed. Is such a change pleasing to you, or do you hope to recommend yourself to Mary Armstrong by so doing? If such be your thought I believe you will find yourself widely mistaken. Although her father is engaged in this dishonourable and degrading traffic, and Walter may plead a parent's example for partaking in it, yet what plea have you? and Mary is too wise and good to be blind to the pernicious tendency to which it leads, and is worthy of a lover of more exalted character than a smuggler can pretend to. Therefore mark my words, Henry. You are about to degrade your reputation, to engage in a transaction repugnant both to mine and your sister's feelings, and to become too uncertain, and too unworthy a lodger to be an acceptable inmate in this hitherto peaceable dwelling." This reproof was not more severe than Henry had anticipated, and what was worse, he knew likewise it was not unmerited; but as his mind was fully made up respecting the course he meant to pursue, he replied without any hesitation. "Edward, I know you wish me well, and therefore mean not to quarrel with you. That such commerce is illegal, I will not deny; and that it is both attended with some risk, and may, by possibility, lead to an unfortunate result, I will not dispute; but there are many more men whom the world esteems as honourable engaged

in it than you are aware of. The money I mean to risk in this first trial cannot, if I lose it, materially affect my future prospects; and if I find the result to be either unequal to the risk, or attended with such degradation as you seem to apprehend, I will have nothing more to do with it. Till that trial be made, I know I am neither a proper nor a welcome inmate of your house, and therefore you need not distress yourself on that account. You will likewise please not to throw Mary Armstrong in my face; with our connexion you have nothing to do; however, it pleases me to inform you, that as yet she knows nothing of my intention, and that I believe neither her nor her mother will approve of it; but my word is given, and I will not recall it; no, neither to please them, my sister, nor you. I have a right to regulate my own actions, and when I want advice I will ask it. You may say what you please to your wife concerning this affair; but it will be best for all parties to treat it as a mere speculation as it really is, or as a matter of indifference." This advice was subsequently followed to the very letter. The sister and brother-in-law of Henry perceived his preparations to fulfil his engagements with silent sorrow, but they strictly refrained from asking him any questions; and he, on the other hand, never mentioned the subject to them.

Not long after this conversation took place between the brothers-in-law, Henry, in company with Robin and Walter Armstrong, met those who were to join them in the enterprise at the house of Lucas, in order to arrange the extent and disposal of the intended purchase; and this meeting was much more orderly than he anticipated. It was attended by an agent who acted for the captain of the vessel, who undertook to deliver the goods at a certain part of the coast at a stipulated price, according to the samples he produced, and every man wrote down the sum which he meant to venture, which, of course, he was to pay upon the delivery of the amount he subscribed for; and so particular were they, that after this was settled, the agent was not suffered to be present while they concluded upon their own private engagements. The sum which Henry wrote down was much more considerable than he had originally determined upon. Robin Armstrong, whom he imagined was not overstocked with cash, to the mutual astonishment of his former partners and Henry, made himself responsible for a sum far beyond their expectations; and as he was next in turn, Henry, from a kind of false pride, pledged himself to the same amount. This was far beyond what Lucas and Robinson could possibly spare at the time, and more than six times the extent to which Brown and Westray stood pledged. These comprised the whole number privy to this meeting; but Henry understood that there were other gangs wholly unconnected with them, which would attend the landing, and take charge of their own separate concerns. After some private conversation amongst them, Lucas rose and thus addressed the meeting:—"Noo, lads, everything is settled amang oursels; but that no man may plead ignorant how things are to be, it is better to mention our agreement thus openly, that all may be fair and square. You, Henry Clementson, must understand that a joint concern is the best tie upon a man's honesty; though every man's profits are regulated by

his share. Every one is allowed reasonable expenses for his work, and a reasonable profit upon what he sells beyond his own share ; and as you are deeply engaged in this adventure, you shall yourself be one to exchange what we have to spare with Richie Foster and his connexions. So now, lads, everything is concluded ; one dram to a happy completion of our bargain, and when all is over, a merry meeting be among us." The dram was drunk with apparent cordiality, and the company broke up immediately.

Henry, of course, accompanied Robin and Walter Armstrong to Salter, where, in the course of the evening, Walter, as had previously been agreed upon, talked openly with his father respecting their immediate share of the arrangements ; and suddenly checking himself, turned round to his mother and Mary. "Apropos," said he ; "I have news for you both. Harry there has had some spare cash thrown in his hands, and I have persuaded him to risk a part of it this trip. What think you of that ?" "I think," said Mrs. Armstrong, without hesitation, "I may venture to speak for both Mary and myself ; and if he has done what I never imagined he would do, he deserves to lose it." "Your wind exceeds your wisdom," said Robin Armstrong. "He cannot lose it without the same loss lighting where it will produce nothing which can add to your comfort, and therefore you speak foolishly." "I will not bandy words with you, Robert, about the matter. Henry Clementson is his own master ; but I believe both his relations and friends would have been better otherwise." "You say right, Mrs. Armstrong," said Henry, eager to drop the dispute ; "and it is certainly a thing I never anticipated ; but Walter says true, I had some money unemployed, and have perhaps acted somewhat rashly ; but I hope if we do not gain anything else, I may possibly acquire some knowledge by the speculation, and the novelty attending it cannot fail to furnish me some amusement." Little more was said upon the subject ; the trio were satisfied with having thus broken the ice ; Mary said nothing, and her mother not willing to run the risk of provoking her husband, was content to change the conversation.

Upon one of the succeeding nights a considerable landing was effected upon the sea coast, about two miles south of the harbour of Whitehaven. The different parties which attended formed a considerable body, which was the more formidable as during the time of removal they acted in conjunction. Such measures were promptly adopted as rendered a surprise almost impossible. The purchases made by our immediate party were instantly removed to a cavern formed in the side of one of those old subterraneous entrances to the Howgill colliery, except what was sufficient to load the horses they had brought with them, which they deposited in their own sanctum sanctorum in Thistlehill. All went on smoothly during this night's expedition ; every man's attendance and cash were equal to his promises, and no alarm occurred upon the road home ; yet the secrecy of the enterprise, and the uncertainty attending it, created in the mind of Henry that lively interest which the prospect of gain, joined with the idea of complicated danger, though remote, never fails to produce in youthful and courageous minds.

Henry's next object was to endeavour to dispose of the illegal

merchandise for which he had paid so large a sum of money, and as he was as little acquainted with the practice of doing so, as the means were disagreeable to his proud and fancied independence, he was necessarily obliged to employ some of those subordinate agents to the gang on whose honesty he had the most dependence. In this, however, he succeeded tolerably well. It had always been the policy of the richer members who made the purchases to strive to keep their associates poor, and likewise ignorant of the precise place of concealment; they were, therefore, both satisfied with a moderate profit, and eager to distinguish themselves in the service of their new employer; being instigated as well by the hope of profiting by his superior generosity, as by the idea that it was the readiest method of acquiring a complete knowledge of those secrets with which they remained unacquainted. To these, perhaps, might be added another stimulus which tended to insure their probity; they were too well acquainted with the character and prowess of Henry to entertain any notion of cheating him with impunity, and were more afraid of the castigation which they considered themselves certain of receiving from him upon detection, than of the more uncertain, though more deadly vengeance which alone was in the power of any of the rest to bestow. This manner of disposing of his share of the stock was neither exactly calculated upon, nor altogether agreeable to his associates; but as he kept the necessary secrets inviolable, and they had no remedy but acquiescence, they did not deem it prudent to interfere; and therefore when the time arrived which they had fixed upon to meet their eastern associates for the purpose of selling their brandy and Hollands, or exchanging it for whiskey, Henry, although his individual profits were less according to the amount of his share, was as forward in the disposal of his own stock as the oldest and best initiated amongst them. During this time he kept up such an appearance of cordiality with his sister and her husband, and was so often with them, that his acquaintances perceived nothing extraordinary in his conduct; although he took particular care that no person engaged with him in the business, or any part of the goods, should ever come near the premises of his brother-in-law, as he was sensible that such a circumstance would tend to renew their former dispute. Of Mary Armstrong he likewise considered himself safe. She had at first felt extremely hurt, and remonstrated with him pretty freely respecting his conduct, but that was soon got over; he knew she loved him; and when to those excuses which he could reasonably urge in extenuation to the daughter and sister of the men whom she knew were solicitous for him to plunge into those pursuits in which they had been so long engaged, and which formed the very "head and front of his offending," was added the unanswerable plea that it was their mutual affection which urged him to the act; that it was the hope that it would tend to promote their happiness, to enable him sooner to claim her as his own, her who was dearer to him than his own life; what woman that truly loves could continue inflexible? Indeed he sometimes fancied that there was a stifled sigh, a something in the breast of Mary which at times made him imagine that she concealed from him some thought which she considered inimical to their hap-

piness ; but as he concluded that if it was really so, it had reference to events which he felt unwilling to revert to, he forebore to agitate an inquiry which might, after all, be destitute of any foundation but what originated in his own over scrupulous fancy.

Thus passed the time until the period fixed for their eastern journey, in which Walter, Brown, Lucas, and three or four hired assistants were to accompany him. The weather was clear and frosty, and the moon shone in the full brilliancy of her meridian splendour. Of this advantage, however, they did not always avail themselves, for in some parts of their route through the open country they hesitated not to pursue their road in the broad daylight ; diverging occasionally from the direct path, as business or regular intelligence of any probable or projected hazard influenced their movements ; and after a successful journey they arrived at the residence of Richie Foster without any material accident. The novelty of this excursion, their manner of travelling, the alarms to which they were subject, and the incessant activity and fatigue which, in pursuits of this nature are indispensable, would, to a weak and irresolute mind, have formed so many discouraging objections ; but to the ardent and undaunted spirit of Henry the case was far otherwise ; it was to him a life replete with interest ; it added spurs to his natural activity of disposition, and while it tended to make him despise the sober and comparatively indolent manner in which he had hitherto passed his time, it served to inflame his love, as well by the unavoidable absence which it occasioned, as by the fuel created by a new and more energetical train of thinking, which, if it did not enable him to regard the object of his desire in a more pleasing and rational point of view, fanned the flame which already burned within him, by exciting that feverish expectation occasioned by continually presenting to his imagination those means which were to accelerate the gratification of it.

By Richie and Tommy Foster our hero was received with the same cordiality as their own relative ; and during the two days they remained, as well to refresh their wearied horses as to time their future proceedings, their kindness rather increased than diminished. Although Tommy, remembering his former defeats, failed not to engage both his cousin and Henry in athletic exercises the very next day. Tommy and his father had latterly entertained an idea that his improvement, and the renown he had since acquired, would make the result of another trial with Henry somewhat different from the first, but in this expectation they were widely deceived ; the latter still retained a great superiority in leaping, and after a few trials, Tommy acknowledged, what indeed was sufficiently evident, that he had no pretensions to wrestle him ; but to the credit of both father and son, this made no difference in their conduct towards him, and when the appointed time arrived, Richie, Tommy, and their adherents, joining themselves to the former party, crossed the borders of the two kingdoms to a place of rendezvous.

The place of general resort, on the full of every third moon, for an almost innumerable multitude of contraband traders who met for the purpose of general traffic, was on the western side of a wild and

otherwise unfrequented heath. The building was large and extensive, and had at a former period been considered a place of some strength and consequence, but it was now considerably dilapidated, and fast approaching to a state of comparative ruin. It still, however, upon these particular occasions, continued to present a scene as complicated and varied, if not so warlike and superb, as in the time of its proudest grandeur. Ranged upon the floors of several apartments there were piled for exchange or sale large and irregular heaps of such articles as were subject to heavy excise duties, from the light and transparent piece of French lace, to those goods whose weight scarcely permitted their conveyance to any great distance without such an additional burthen in the way of carriage as nearly to obliterate all chance of profiting by the trial. The dress and dialect of the different dealers were not more diversified than their employment; the first two embraced all the gradations from the "hoddin grey," and vulgar idiom of the Western Cumbrian, to the breeless and provincial Gaelic of the Highlander; and the last consisted of a variety of gaming in the way of amusement, from putting the stone, to the rattling of the dice; athletic exercises, from the polished wrestle to the brutish fight; and drinking, smoking, trading, and swearing, likewise contributed to vary and enliven, if they did not tend to improve the motley scene. Some of these desperadoes were furnished with provisions of their own catering, and the owner or tenant of the antiquated mansion had provided an ample supply of mutton and venison pasties, cheese, bread, &c.; and the rapacity and perseverance with which they were attacked, fully vouched for the appetites and masticating powers of the assailants. In the early part of the day our immediate party, under the direction of Richie Foster, had completed their mercantile concerns, and prepared them for loading; but being necessitated to wait till their horses were duly refreshed for the journey, they were sauntering about and amusing themselves among the speculating multitude, when Henry, to his surprise and astonishment, was complimented with a violent blow over his shoulders with a whip, and before he could well turn round to defend himself, he was seized by the collar with a grasp which would not have disgraced Hercules. "Damn thee," exclaimed his assailant, "I will twist the nwose off thy feace befowre thee, or any sic macaroni shall cheat me of a single farden." A violent struggle between the parties was the immediate consequence; and it was not till after some desperate efforts upon both sides that our hero, to the evident astonishment of the numerous byestanders, succeeded in laying his enraged opponent upon his back.

The antagonist of Henry was a competitor of no common stamp; his name was Fergus, alias Fardy Douglas, a border farmer of redoubted courage and prowess, and who had for some years been a regular frequenter, and the acknowledged champion of this freebooting mart. Fardy was not above five feet and three quarters high, but he was broad and square built, a man of uncommon muscular powers; his head, and indeed his breast, when stripped, was as black as the hide of a Galloway bull, and his skin itself partook more of the yellow and dun than the usual red and white. Douglas some few

years before had been engaged in a most dreadful conflict with Richie Foster at this very place, which (after sufficiently abusing each other) by the interference of their mutual friends, ended in a drawn battle; but owing to the increasing age of Richie, and Fardy being at this time not more than thirty years of age, the latter had assumed all the arrogance of a conqueror; and as Richie was through course of years getting worse, and Tommy wanted both age and strength to contend with such a hero, they had reluctantly been obliged to submit to his claims, and Douglas, naturally fiery and illnatured, often conducted himself in a manner which argued a consciousness that no man in the whole assemblage durst hazard a battle with him. The cause of his attack upon Henry was one of frequent occurrence amongst such an unprincipled crew. Early in the morning Richie Foster had purchased some whiskey of a plaided Gael, for which Henry had paid him in cash; but previous to its removal, the roguish Highlander had exchanged it for tobacco with Douglas, and had instantly departed with his booty. As Henry himself had soon after this circumstance taken it to his other stock, Douglas, on missing it, was immediately directed to him as the person who had claimed it, and perceiving Henry was connected with the Fosters, towards whom he still cherished a secret animosity, he had, without troubling himself with any further inquiry, eagerly seized this opportunity of renewing his quarrel with them. Upon their falling, a number of bystanders apprehending there was some mistake in the affair, promptly interfered; and a regular and clear explanation was the consequence, as the first purchase, and payment for the whiskey was undeniably proved by different persons who had witnessed the whole transaction; and the result was, that Fardy had been tricked by the Highlander, who had no right to barter goods which were no longer his own. The fall, however, which he had received, added to his natural overbearing insolence, made him deaf both to reason and remonstrance; he said that he likewise had paid for the goods, and that he would therefore fight either the chap himself, or any of his company for them; or, as he had paid for them, he would take them in despite of any man. Richie Foster, willing to be rid of a dispute with Douglas almost on any terms, offered to lose half out of his own pocket rather than his friend should be drawn into a scrape, but even this proposal was received with contempt. Never had Richie Foster been known to succumb so much to any man; but, at his years, he felt convinced that submission was his wisest plan, although his blood boiled within him, when he heard Fardy declare his intention of taking immediate possession; as neither the pretended owner nor his backers dared to accept his challenge. Henry had all this time remained passive. His courage, though undaunted in the extreme, was cool and collected; and however great the provocation, he still retained the complete possession of his temper. He had never, when provoked to a trial, hitherto met with an opponent capable of contending with him; and he felt that if he suffered himself to be thus bullied and choused, he would deem it an everlasting disgrace. He therefore stepped forward, and calmly observed that as all other means had failed he would accept Fardy's own proposal; and trusting that though a stranger amongst them,

he would have fair play, he would fight Douglas for the goods in dispute. His own party at first endeavoured to dissuade him from the attempt; but upon his observing that their endeavours were entirely fruitless, they acquiesced, and Richie and Tommy both stripped as his avowed backers. A large space of ground being cleared for the contest, Douglas, attended by two of his own friends, immediately entered it with all the confidence of anticipated victory. The spectators in general were of the same opinion, and notwithstanding the intolerable insolence of Fardy, offered immense odds in his favour. These were greedily taken by Henry's party to a large amount; Brown had witnessed his contest with Jock Harrison, and Richie and Tommy from their own experience had great confidence in his activity and address. He was nearly two inches taller than Douglas, and that advantage, combined with his greater command of temper, was, in their opinion, a sufficient counterpoise to Fardy's superior strength and weight.

The battle commenced on the part of Douglas with equal eagerness and fury. Henry, skilfully protecting himself from the blows of his antagonist, retreated a few paces backwards, till having gained his proper distance, he planted so dreadful a blow over the right eye of Fardy as not only made the blood immediately, but at the same time nearly closed it; and availing himself of the confusion this occasioned, he followed it up by another equally forcible under the ear, which brought him down with great violence. Other two meetings were fought equally to Fardy's disadvantage; when his uncle, who had been the don of the day, roared out, "Damn ye, Fardy lad, grapple wi' him, or by G——d he'll no leave ye an eye to ken a muir frae a middin." The advice, however, came too late; already a blinkard, and his remaining vision partly obscured by streams of blood, he could not succeed in closing without being frequently knocked down; and when he did so, weakened and confused by the blows he had received, he was instantly thrown down by the first efforts of an antagonist in full possession of his wind and temper, and who at any time was his decided superior in science. This state of things could not last very long. Notwithstanding the strength and hardihood of Fardy, his foolish confidence and want of proper temper and caution at the commencement, rendered him an easy conquest to so skilful and formidable an opponent. He was at length dropped, and remained for some time insensible; and his uncle, fully conscious that in case of his revival all further contention was absolute madness, had him removed to the inside of the building. The old man before quitting the place, observing Henry little the worse for the conflict, could not help exclaiming to his friends, "saw ye ever the leike o' that, boys? Yon western deevil mun hae dealings wi' auld Nick, or he could na' hae threshed Fardy Douglas, and hae received sic sma' pay for his daurg."

It will easily be imagined that among the numerous congratulations Henry received upon the termination of the contest, those of Walter Armstrong were not the least sincere. Walter, though thoroughly impressed with a conviction of his friend's invincibility, did not calculate upon his obtaining so easy a victory over the border champion, whom

he knew well enough by report, having often heard his father, who had been an eye witness, dwell upon the fight between him and Richie ; and as the powers of Fardy Douglas could not have declined since that period, he thought, that independent of the unequal chance of fair play, Henry, if victorious, must receive nearly equal abuse and injury, and he had upon that account been the most strenuous in wishing him to decline fighting ; but from a better knowledge of him than any of the rest, he quickly perceived that notwithstanding his seeming calmness he was resolved to fight Douglas sooner than pay, or suffer any other to pay a single farthing for the redemption of the goods in dispute. Perceiving a contest unavoidable, he had therefore taken the odds against Henry to the full extent of his means, and taken great pains in procuring sufficient room for the combatants, as the most likely means of ensuring fair play. Of the last there had been much less to apprehend than he was aware of ; many of the spectators had, upon other occasions, been disgusted at the overbearing conduct of Douglas without daring to resent it ; and Henry had beaten him so easily, that they were too much surprised, even if they had had the inclination, to interrupt the fight. The exultation of the warm hearted seconds of Henry were likewise without bounds. For as they were deeply interested in the issue, as well by their good wishes towards one of the combatants and dislike of the other, as in a pecuniary point of view, they had been extremely attentive during the fight to the interests of their man ; and now when it was over much sooner than they thought it could be possible, their joy at the result was in proportion to the supposed prowess of the redoubted Fardy Douglas. As for our hero himself, he was pleased with the contest so far as regarded the final event ; but he would gladly have dispensed with the laurels he had acquired, if by so doing, the necessity for fighting could have been averted ; for he deeply felt that though victorious, the act itself was degrading whatever was the provocation, if that was occasioned or originated in consequence of the pursuit of an illegal or dishonourable action. And if such combats were found to be unavoidable in the career he had commenced, they would inevitably cause him to abandon it ; for he felt that if defeated in any of them, his haughty spirit would consider itself forever disgraced ; and therefore the only satisfaction he experienced was, that the result of this would probably be a means of averting the frequent recurrence of such proceedings in future. In the midst of the congratulations of his friends, a horseman was perceived approaching them at full gallop ; the eagle eye of Richie Foster soon identified the rider, a discovery which caused him to start immediately upon his feet. "I'm thinking we have no time to lose, boys," cried he, "for Dickie Scott comes not here without cause." The event fully justified the prediction ; the rider perceiving Richie Foster, rode directly up to him, and put a slip of paper into his hands. It contained but a few words, but these were sufficiently important, and their purport was instantly made known to the whole assemblage.

The contents of the note were simply this :—

"Richie of the Heather Burn,—Some score of light horsemen from Carlisle, and four excisemen, have just reached this. They are fol-

lowed by a party of foot, and will be with you in two hours. I will take care that they follow the great road. You know who."

The bustle this information occasioned may be easily conceived. The horses were instantly made ready, and loaded with the merchandise of their respective masters; and after quickly removing the remainder to recesses known only to a few of the most trustworthy, the different parties lost no time in pursuing such routes as suited their ulterior purposes. The party of which Richie Foster might be deemed the leader, immediately branched off into a more private and less frequented road than the one which they had previously chosen; and thus carefully avoiding the direction which their trusty scout took care to lead the unwary officers and their party. They reached the habitation of their guide before daybreak, and safely deposited their loading in a place almost perfectly impenetrable to the keenest scrutiny. The refreshment of man and horse was the next and most urgent measure; and in two hours after their arrival at the house of Richie Foster the whole party were buried in profound repose.

The continual dread of losing any particular thing of which they are possessed, will, by thus confining their attention, more endear it to the minds of mankind in general, than any other subject of corresponding magnitude. It is only when we are in imminent danger of parting with it, that we are impressed with the full importance of its real or imaginary value; and hence an ideal attachment is created so far beyond what mature reason and reflection will eventually sanction, that we are ourselves astonished at its preponderance. This was in some measure the present case with Henry Clementson. The fatigues of the night were drowned in his solicitude for the safety of their cargo; and when that was placed in supposed security, the danger they had incurred was in accordance with the daring activity of his own mind. The greatest misfortune of his life had been the want of some honourable and determined aim, which, by pointing out a road to happiness and independence, would, at the same time, have furnished ample employment to a genius so fertile by devising and pursuing the necessary means for attaining them; and thus his present enterprise, by first riveting his attention, became interesting to him; an interest the more seducing, as its success was in some measure combined with that only other object of pursuit, the accomplishment of which could have had material effect upon his future welfare. It is immaterial to the future interest of the tale to launch much further into any particular detail of this first dereliction of Henry from the path of seeming rectitude; I shall therefore only observe that their return was as prosperous as their journey outwards. The settlement which immediately succeeded was satisfactory to all parties. The profits attending the speculation were fully equal to what they had anticipated, and Henry found he had realised nearly two hundred pounds by this single expedition, which from its commencement to its termination embraced a very inconsiderable period. This, while it encouraged him to persevere in the system, weakened his relish for those calm and temperate enjoyments which he had before found in the tranquil abode of his brother-in-law. It was true, he was often personally present as heretofore, present both at his wonted avocations, and at the usual

hours of devotion; and though all parts of this once happy family endeavoured to resume their usual habits of familiarity towards each other, it was in vain. The source of mutual confidence was gone; the mind of Henry was perceptibly absent; and there was a constraint in his demeanour which betrayed a consciousness of his having first broken that pure and brotherly tie which used to subsist between him and his relations; and that want of cordiality insensibly communicated its deadening impulse over the behaviour of the whole family. Nor was this his only source of uneasiness; there was a seeming mystery attached to his reception in the Armstrong family which he was unable to fathom. Robin Armstrong received him with a kind of suspicious air, which seemed to intimate that he would have been better pleased with his absence; the embarrassment of Mrs. Armstrong and the nurse on his entrance was often too visible to escape his notice; and though Walter always treated him with his wonted openness, yet, to his extreme astonishment, he was always evidently confused upon their first meetings. As for Mary herself, she appeared far from well; the unwonted manner in which she received him, the half smothered and involuntary sighs which sometimes unconsciously escaped her; and that dejected anxiety with which she listened to his vows of unalterable fidelity, though it savoured of anything rather than indifference, almost petrified him. The business in which he had latterly been engaged had made him a very coward; the consciousness that he was no longer that same Henry Clementson who had hitherto justly plumed himself upon the rectitude of his intentions, and the untainted uprightness of his conduct, made him afraid of boldly demanding an explanation lest his complaints should be met by those oracular predictions which denounced sorrow to their union, and the little confidence which could be placed in a man who had become a defrauder of the revenue, without the common plea of necessity, inclination, or the want of better knowledge.

In the midst of this inquietude of mind Henry accepted an invitation from a particular friend to spend an evening with him in Egremont. It was late before they parted, and upon his road home, he thus accidentally fell in with Will Sinclair, who was likewise returning from the same ancient town. Will was in his wonted chirpy and talkative mood, and their late transactions together naturally became the subject of discourse.

"Well," said Will, "it was a lucky job that throughout. We o' made a good thing enough of it; but Rob Armstrong, where think ye he gat the better half of his cash?" "How should I know that, Will. I do not know much about his concerns, but your master Lucas, as well as Brown and Robinson, seemed somewhat surprised; and I own it was a larger sum than I thought he could have commanded. But he was to his word, and therefore it was nothing to any of us how he came by it." True, master Henry, you were all of you surprised that he had it; but you will be more so when you come to know how he came by it, take my word for that. Well, Rob Armstrong is a deep fellow after all; but seeing, is believing, or I would not have credited my own father in this matter. What does not lay in a body's way need not break one's shins; therefore I have

not yet made anybody as wise as myself; but I think I ought to tell you, although you will not thank me for the news, I guess." "It can be nothing to me Will how Rob came by the money; it was not to my cost I assure thee." "By jingo but it was though; suppose Parker advanced him the money upon sufficient security?" "Parker!—Jonah Parker, advance the money! you are mad, Will! But supposing he did, and upon sufficient security, what is that to me?" "I tell you it is though. Look ye. Henry Clementson; security may be of different kinds, and so may interest too. There are more Toms in York than one! To be sure the lass, is a bonny lass; but a woman's a woman after all! and either you or Parker must be jilted at last, for a certainty. Do you smoke a badger now?"

The amazement of Henry at this piece of intelligence, which under other circumstances he would have deemed incredible, was unbounded. Jonah Parker a suitor for the daughter of a smuggler against whose confederates he seemed to cherish such inveterate hatred; and so far certain of success, as to advance a considerable sum of money upon his prospect of succeeding! If it was so, Parker had either some sinister mischief in view, or he was bewitched; otherwise he, the greedy Parker, would not have parted with his cash upon such slender security as the honesty of Robin Armstrong. But was it possible that Mary could sanction his addresses? His own Mary, upon whose purity and fidelity he would have risked his existence! It was almost incredible; and yet it was more than propable that there was some truth in Will Sinclair's story. However astonished and disturbed at this intelligence, Henry's calmness of temper enabled him to receive it with out his informer being able to discover any particular emotion; for this he was certainly indebted to the darkness of the night, as Sinclair was a shrewd cunning fellow and would have watched his countenance narrowly to perceive the reception his story met with; but so long as Henry could command his wonted calmness of speech, a little surprise and incredibility was no more than natural. He therefore without betraying the real feelings of his mind drew from Sinclair the whole of what he knew relative to the affair.

It appeared that Lucas had expressed his surprise to his trusty agent at the sum which Armstrong produced; and Will, observing Parker upon the very night after his master's departure eastwards with Henry on his road towards Salter, had the curiosity to watch him. At first he imagined that there was some treachery intended, but he was not long in discovering his real motives for the visit. The nurse of Mary Armstrong frequently called in at the adjoining dwelling where Will Sinclair often resorted; and as they both possessed a superabundance of the gift of speech, a kind of familiar intimacy had subsisted between them for some time. By this means, and his own unwearied attention, Will soon unravelled the whole mystery. The seeming impenetrable heart of Jonah Parker had yielded to the charms of Mary Armstrong; and he had in consequence thrown himself in the way of her father, to whom after considerable circumlocution he declared his wishes; and fully conscious that his chance of success must in a great measure depend upon him, he made such offers as awakened the cupidity of a man destitute of principle, naturally covetous, and generally needy.

The part which Robin Armstrong now undertook to perform required infinite address and management, and he succeeded in it to admiration. Parker knew who he had for a rival, and the resentment of Henry was equally dreaded by him, and his wily assistant; who upon the seeming strength of his promises and good wishes contrived to persuade him to advance money as a preliminary, which, while it was employed for their mutual advantage, was the surest guarantee to bind their interests, and insure their sincerity. He had likewise to endeavour to deceive Henry, and to exert that authority over his wife and children which his rights as a husband and father entitled him to. He therefore got Walter out of the way, by permitting him to accompany Henry and Lucas, and availed himself of the opportunity his absence occasioned, by endeavouring to impress upon the minds of his wife and daughter the great advantages which the latter would derive from a connexion with Parker in preference to Henry Clementson; who, from aversion to any regular calling, had now engaged in that very business of which they had so often expressed their abhorrence. After a good deal of cavilling about the matter, the business ended by Mrs. Armstrong declaring, that as neither her inclination nor conscience would permit her to become the foe of Henry Clementson, her compliance with her husband's threats and commands should extend no further than a perfect neutrality; and Mary's positive avowal, that neither her father's threats nor promises should ever induce her either to encourage the addresses, or keep company with Jonah Parker. But that in obedience to his commands, she would neither expose him to the resentment of Henry Clementson, nor forbid Parker's visits. As it was necessary to unfold the whole transaction to Walter upon his return, no time was lost in doing so. His astonishment at the conduct and duplicity of his father was only equalled by his rage. During the first paroxysm of his passion, he swore that he never would submit to connive at a scheme which threatened so completely to destroy the happiness of both his sister and the very man to whom they were under such deep and lasting obligations; and that he would at once settle the business by horsewhipping Parker the first time he found him about the premises. "My son," said his mother, "you now forget yourself. Mr. Parker has the same right to address your sister that Henry Clementson has; and the most inexcusable part of this unpleasant affair, I grieve to say, rests with your father. But both reason and duty forbid your interference in the manner you threaten. You have no right to molest Parker, nor to forbid the visits of any person to your father's house, whom he himself thinks proper not only to permit, but invite." "Perhaps you are right, mother," replied Walter. "I may not. But what right has Parker to subject Mary to any persecution after he knows he is an unwelcome suitor? or what right has even my father to fling away her peace of mind; my duty to a parent may not sanction my direct interference, but mark my words:—I know Henry Clementson well. The moment he perceives this conspiracy, for it is no better, and finds out that Mary has ever been in private company with Jonah Parker; he no longer will regard her in the same point of view he has hitherto done. She will have made the first breach in that confidence which now subsists between them;

and it will end in the final ruin of one, or both. As for me, I will not be the first to mention this cursed business to him; but if he refers to me for an explanation I will not withhold it." When Robin Armstrong perceived how matters stood with the whole of his family, he guided his measures accordingly. He continued to hold out some hopes to Parker as seemed to insure him of occasional pecuniary assistance, and left the rest to chance. As for the nurse (from whom this could not be concealed), as she was not a party consulted, she thought herself under no particular promise of secrecy, and by degrees, she suffered the cunning Sinclair to draw from her a full account of the whole transaction.

Henry having thus acquired a competent knowledge of the affair, and hinted to his informer, that in the present crisis of their affairs, it would be as well to keep the matter a secret, bent his steps homeward in no very enviable state of mind. What before seemed to him quite inexplicable, was now fully accounted for; and that too in a manner the most revolting to his feelings. It is certain that to a spirit so sensitive and delicate mind, nothing can be more disgusting and disagreeable than the agitation of such squabbles as respect the propriety of any connexion which involves personalities; and in its own peculiar case, a sensitive mind is always guided by such feelings as scarcely admit of an interpretation which can be defended with that appearance of sound reasoning which would be deemed conclusive in any other. It was therefore extremely difficult for Henry Clementson to allow their due weight to those reasons which had influenced the Armstrong family to withhold from him that knowledge which he had acquired through another medium. He had never formally demanded permission of any of the relatives of Mary Armstrong to address her; never explained his intentions towards her; revealed his prospects of the future; or unfold the extent of his capability to support a wife and family; and therefore, as he was a suitor only by tacit permission, he had no deceit or injustice. The same reasoning applied with equal force to Walter and his mother; who, while they remained passive by an injunction, which they were bound to respect, would perhaps have been as well pleased with an open declaration that he was, what is termed an honourable, and not a clandestine suitor, in Mary's favour:—a thing it is true, which he expected was fully understood, but which his extreme, and perhaps blameable, delicacy had caused him to withhold. With Mary herself he felt most displeased, and indeed not without some appearance of reason. The thorough understanding which subsisted between them, ought in justice to have warranted a full disclosure of an affair of such vital importance to them both; and the only excuse which she could possibly plead independent of her father's inhibition, was his engagement in the present concern without previously acquainting her. The question now was, what progress had Parker been able to make in this unexpected amour? If Mary had either kept private company, or permitted any of those liberties which the generality of mankind pronounce, no immodest, she was lost to him for ever; and if ever he again persuaded her, it should be with very different designs from any which he had hitherto cherished.

The ensuing evening was dark and rather stormy; but the twilight had no sooner begun to decline, than Henry, restless and unhappy, took the road to Salter. He had passed a sleepless night, and his thoughts during the day were fully occupied with love and Mary Armstrong, with bitter recollections of the past, and in the formation of vague and undeterminate schemes of revenge upon all who he thought had injured him, for the future. Amidst this chaos of conflicting ideas he found himself at the gate which led directly to Salter. It was a night on which he could not be expected, and that had formed one of his chief reasons for the journey; but now that it was accomplished, he could not resolve what immediate measures were most suitable for the situation in which he was placed. In the midst of this dilemma, he heard the sound of footsteps approaching him, and not wishing to be seen, he slowly retreated down the short lane which led to the buildings. The sound of voices now became audible; and perceiving they were still advancing towards him, he took refuge amongst some old lumber which was piled in an open shed adjoining the barn. The speakers advanced deliberately to the same place, and availing themselves of the shelter it afforded, leisurely continued the conversation. "You will recollect our agreement," said one of them. "As soon as this business is over, Mary keeps no more private company with Henry Clementson, and we are to run joint shares in the sum I mentioned. I have done all but forbid Henry the house upon your account, and a quarrel is inevitable. Mary has agreed to receive you with more kindness, and doubt not but I will, in a little time, settle all to your satisfaction." The voice of Robin Armstrong was as well known to the anxious listener, as the canting and methodical tone of the person he addressed. "I will abide by mine own share of our agreement, Mr. Armstrong, and trust you will fulfil your's. As for the young man Clementson, I mean him no ill; but respecting the maiden, your daughter, I mean to win her if I can; and you know that in love and war all advantages are fair." "Then come along. Act as I have directed you, and the day is your own. I'll warrant you."

The blood of Henry boiled with indignation at the avowed and systematic treachery which he now clearly perceived had been practised against him, and scarcely could he restrain the desire he felt to dash the heads of the two speakers together. A moment's reflection, however, convinced him of the impolicy of the measure, and he suffered them to enter the house unmolested. The door was no sooner closed than he drew up to the window, but in addition to those whom he had seen enter, there was no other inmate except the nurse. That was quickly accounted for by Robin Armstrong's conducting his chosen confederate through that apartment to another in which they sometimes sat, the windows of which were placed in the opposite side of the dwelling. Thither the impatient and jealous lover immediately repaired. The window-shutters were closed in the inside, but the small interstice between them enabled him to discover what was passing within. The principal light was occasioned by a candle, beside which sat Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter, while her husband and Jonah Parker drew up towards the declining embers of a wood fire. Henry

could not help remarking the extreme agitation and confusion of Mary, which he was conscious was owing to the entrance of her father and his companion; his own feelings were likewise upon the rack, and he continued to watch them for some time with the intense anxiety of a man who felt that a very few minutes would decide an event which was inseparably connected with his future happiness. The denouement was fully as near as he had calculated upon. Mrs. Armstrong rose, and left the apartment without daring to cast one look upon her devoted daughter, whose eyes followed her beaming with an expression of mingled sorrow and despair, while Robin Armstrong, after seizing the candle, and addressing a few words in an under tone of voice to the remaining parties, soon followed his wife and closed the door after him. All was now dark and silent within, and Henry withdrew from the window.

This was by far the bitterest moment he had ever experienced. It was the final blow to those hopes which he had cherished from the earliest period of his acquaintance with Mary Armstrong, and so dreadful was the shock, that for a few minutes his haughty spirit, unsupported by the presence of any human witness, was quite subdued. He leaned against the wall, supported his dizzy brow with his hands, and the predictions of Ellen Anderson glancing through his mind, contributed to unman him so much that he burst into tears. This however continued not long. A soul naturally proud and undaunted soon recovered from this temporary effeminacy; and once roused to a sense of its wonted dignity, it soon regained that energy and decision which usually distinguished it. "What have I to regret," said he mentally, "except the loss of that ideal happiness which appears to have been built upon a slippery foundation. A connexion with the daughter of an unprincipled smuggler, the consequences of which were long since foretold to me, and which, by regular degrees, induced me to forfeit the esteem of those friends in whose innocent and engaging society I was previously happy. Yes, I will renounce Mary Armstrong for ever! leave her to Parker, or to be transferred to any other more wealthy suitor, as may be most advantageous to the intrigues of her wily and rascally father, and return to those habits, and that happiness which I was fool enough to spurn at. But shall I leave them happy in the accomplishment of their villainy? quit her whom I have loved without one interview to tell her I am acquainted with her perfidy, or expose those arts of which we have been the victims? No! I will not. Though I am alone and unobserved, I will not suffer even my own feelings to upbraid me with quitting these premises like a skulking fox, when I ought with propriety to leave them in a different manner." And after waiting a few minutes to calm and collect his mind, he without further ceremony opened the door, and walked into the house where Robin Armstrong, his wife, and the nurse, were communing together, though in a sulky and dissatisfied humour towards one another. In fact, at the very moment of Henry's entrance, the whole trio were engaged in mutual altercation. Mrs. Armstrong, fully conscious that the present measures of her husband would end in the misery of their child, thought it her duty to expostulate pretty freely with him upon the injustice of his proceedings;

but at the same time, she was not pleased with the liberties taken by the nurse, who roundly and openly taxed them both with double-dealing and ingratitude towards Henry. Robin himself found some difficulty in preserving his wonted authority, and as he was never more prepared to carry his promise of forbidding Henry the house into execution, he determined to seize time by the forelock, and did not suffer him to get seated before he asked him in a sulky tone, "what had brought him there that night?" "Business!" exclaimed Henry sternly, and fixing his fiery eye upon his interrogator at the same instant, "Business. Wherefore do you ask?" The emphasis with which he spoke, and his resolute look overawed Armstrong so much that he remained silent, and confused; while Henry turning to his wife, asked her where Walter was? She answered coolly, "That he was not at home at present, but had not been absent long." "Was Mary with him?" "No: Mary was far from well." "He hoped she was not confined, for he wished to see her." "She is too ill to see any person at present," said Robin, "for which she may thank you. Therefore to cut the matter short, she wishes never to see you more: and I further tell you that this is my house, and the sooner you quit it the better." "Did Mary charge you with such a message to me? or are you making yourself unnecessarily busy upon this, as upon other occasions?" "What do you mean by that, Sir?" "I mean that you are a low-lived, rascally, and deliberate scoundrel! and a liar of the greatest, and most villainous extent to boot! That you have bartered the happiness of your daughter in exchange for the assistance of a man whom you otherwise despise! That you have invented the most infamous lies to defame my character, in order to support your cursed compact; and that were you not the husband of that excellent woman, and the father of Walter and Mary Armstrong, I would dash your head against the walls of your own house." Robin Armstrong was no coward, but he was too wise to bandy words with the enraged youth before him; and was besides abashed by the consciousness that the charges against him were too true to admit of a denial. He therefore remained silent, although he by no means wished for the interference of his wife. "For your treatment of my husband," said she coolly, "you may, I believe have some foundation, Henry; but your charges cannot be all true. This letter received this very day, is, at least, a sufficient vindication of one part of his conduct towards you." "That letter! I know nothing about that letter! As it is open I suppose the contents are at my service." He took it leisurely from the extended hand of Mrs. Armstrong, and with amazing calmness read it aloud.

The letter was as follows:—

"My Dearest Love,—This is to inform you that the talked-of marriage between you and me is disagreeable to my friends, who are not willing I should marry the portionless daughter of a smuggler; and imprudent, on account of those incidents with which you are already acquainted. You must therefore not disappoint yourself on my account of any future offers. I will always love you, and will before long tell you so in person.—Your once loved

Henry Clementson."

"And so madam I am to be the victim of so vile and contemptible a plot as this? You have seen my handwriting. Does this resemble either the hand or the style?" or do these wretched lines express the well known sentiments of either my friends or myself? Was not Mary Armstrong as dear to them, as if she had been a beloved sister by birth! As dear to me as my own existence! Me, who if I had been worth thousands would have been proud to have shared them with her, and asked nothing in return but her love, her pure and undivided love. But it is over; this deception is too palpable to impose upon any except those who have wished to believe in it. Farewell madam, farewell nurse, I wish you both well; and tell Mary Armstrong that I wish her all happiness with the *young, handsome, and respectable* gentleman with whom she is now amusing herself in the other apartment." Then dashing the letter upon the floor, and spurning it contemptuously with his foot towards the author of it, he rushed out of the house.

This stormy scene was succeeded by one equally so. The timid Jonah had not "screwed his courage to the sticking place" for opening the meditated siege, before the opening of the outer door, announced the presence of Henry Clementson. Mary immediately rose; and placing the door of the apartment in which they sat ajar, she distinctly overheard every syllable of the foregoing conversation; and the moment that Henry left the house, she entered the place she had just quitted, the very image of sorrow and despair. Her father willing to avert the storm he apprehended, rose to depart with his confederate, who had followed the example of Mary in leaving the other apartment; but her mother again resuming possession of the letter, and examining it minutely, thus accosted him. "Robert Armstrong, you can yourself bear witness that I have taken no active part in this affair, and I now sincerely regret it. This letter you know was never written by Henry Clementson; and all you have so industriously laid to his charge, is, I begin to think, likewise as unfounded; therefore it was now my determination to interfere thus far; before Mary shall again be the victim of such infamous arts, or be forced, or seduced to keep company with Mr Parker or any other man, we will leave you for ever." Her husband's reply was prevented by the entrance of Walter, whose rage at the discovery, was scarcely restrained by the presence of his father, and the consciousness that he had been the principal promoter of the plot. The hand-writing which he had not before seen, he knew to be Parker's, though it was partly disguised; and he instantly upbraided him with it, a charge which his stammering and confusion proved to be sufficiently well grounded. This circumstance so enraged the old nurse, that she stormed like a second Xantippe at both Robin and Jonah, and as the latter was affecting his retreat, she flew at him like a wild cat, and before his coadjutor (who was the only person that attempted it) could rescue him, she not only half strangled him, but was so active with her nails, that the profusion of hair which adorned them, and a few livid streaks upon the frontispiece of her intended victim, bore ample testimony of her good intentions.

Meanwhile Henry Clementson with hasty and towering steps retraced his accustomed road homewards. For some time his pride and passion rendered him insensible to any consideration, except the usage he had experienced; but as this subsided by degrees, the truant love, like a child whose temporary absence serves but to endear it the more, returned with accumulated force; and brought along with it that extreme jealousy, which in an active and ardent mind, is inseparably regulated by affection for the object which created it. Thus like the handkerchief of Othello, the little that Henry had witnessed, gave birth to chimeras which had no other foundation, except in his own distempered, and jealous imagination. That Mary was, with her own premeditated consent, left alone in the dark with Parker, he had indeed witnessed; that that circumstance would pave the way, to those perhaps innocent, though dangerous freedoms, incidental to such a situation, he took for granted; and that if taxed with them, she would positively disavow them, he considered equally as certain. Influenced by these impressions, he resolved to acquaint Mary with all he had seen, to which he added all that his jealous mind so readily suggested. The letter was a poetical one, and was at once highly expressive of his love and the bitterness of his feelings.

With bosom by those feelings torn,
Which spring from injured love, Mary;
I strive—while I thy falsehood mourn,
Thy image to remove, Mary!
Though life was never half so dear,
As thou hast been to me, Mary!
Yet manly pride restrains the tear,
Which fain would flow for thee, Mary.

Although that form of beauty bright
Transcended all below, Mary!
And there was fix'd the sole delight,
I ever hoped to know, Mary:
Yet now its boasted power is gone,
Nor will I e'er be thine, Mary!—
The heart which sighs for more than one,
Shall wake no throb in mine, Mary.

Though graces float around thy head,
And love beams in thine eye, Mary;
And with that lip of ruby red,
Not one on earth can vie, Mary:—
Yet they have lost their power to bless,
Since they became so free, Mary:—
The lip I saw another press,
Shall ne'er be press'd by me, Mary!

That whisper'd thought, in secret sought,
Becomes not candid youth, Mary,
Which when you try to justify,
You violate the truth, Mary;
And when that hidden pledge was given,
He clasp'd you to his breast, Mary,—
Though thou wert purest under Heaven!—
Wild fancy dreams the rest, Mary!

True love is like that little flower,
Just opening to the day, Mary,
Whose leaves when press'd by touch impure
Will wither and decay, Mary:—

So when another sought thy lips,
And press'd that hand of thine, Mary ;
That action threw a dark eclipse,
And poison'd love like mine, Mary.

Adieu those golden dreams of bliss,
I hoped with thee to share, Mary !
Polluted by another's kiss,
They seem no longer fair, Mary :
For aided by indignant pride,
Though thou hast been so dear, Mary,
Before I'd claim thee for my bride—
I'd claim a friendly bier, Mary !

Unfortunately for Henry, his pride did not suffer him to execute his resolution of revealing all that happened, the motives by which he had been actuated, and the determinations he had formed for his future conduct, to his sister, and her husband. This was the rock upon which he eventually foundered, for had he done so, all might have been well; but the seeming coldness of his brother-in-law, and his reluctance to disclose what might be construed either to his own indiscretion or want of discernment, triumphed; and, consequently, when it became apparent that a breach had taken place between him and the Armstrongs, Edward Wilson spoke of it as the inevitable consequence of his deviation from the path of rectitude; and strained the cord to bursting, by declaring that if Mary had discarded him, she had only acted prudently by so doing. The events of the last few days had not tended to improve the temper of Henry; on the contrary, the tumult in his mind made him contradictory and irascible. He therefore instantly took fire at this innuendo of Wilson's, and nothing but his sister's presence prevented him from resenting it otherwise than by quitting the house in a transport of rage, equally angry with Wilson, with Mary Armstrong, with himself, and with all the world. The cock-pit at Whitehaven, a bustling and vindictive scene, in accordance with his present feelings, had the effect of soothing his spirit in some degree. Upon leaving it, a hearty slap on the shoulder partly interrupted his moody cogitations; and on turning round, he found himself in the presence of Walter Armstrong, and Richie and Tommy Foster.

These two worthies had arrived at Salter the preceding day, and as their first enquiry was after Henry Clementson, the conversation naturally led to a detail of the preceding transactions. If this explanation had taken place in the presence of Robin Armstrong, the frank and open heart of Richie would have been less sparing in those censures which, though his conduct fully warranted them, he deemed ungenerous in his absence, and unseemly in the company of his wife and son. "By Jove, nurse," said he, "I wish thou hadst had the grasp of a bear, and the claws of a tiger, and given baith my guid brother, and that manikin such a currclawing as they deserved. Furthermair, when I gang to yon town, I will buy thee a bonnet or a gown for the little thou did'st do, or my naim is'ent Richie Foster! and when I see your Jo, niece, which I will do the morn, I will grabble how his pulse beats. He must have been in a mood to have ta'en auld Cloutie by the horns when he ranted so though! for ye ken Watty, that when he licked that dour deevil Fardy Douglas, and wan us

mair whiskey than we had need of at that time, he was as cool as a cucumber." Walter however elicited a promise, that as he likewise meant to visit Whitehaven, he would first suffer him, if an opportunity presented itself, to enter into such an explanation with Henry respecting what had recently occurred, as he thought necessary for the vindication of such members of the family as had not directly interfered in the business.

The hearty greeting of Richie and Tommy Foster met with as cordial a return from Henry Clementson; nor did he seem to regard Walter in any other light than formerly. The party repaired to another ale-house, where calling for a private room, the history of their late journey, and a few glasses of punch made everything seem as agreeable as possible; and, in fact it was the first happy hour that Henry had experienced since his recounter with Will Sinclair. "Henry," said Walter, "I think it right to acquaint you, that during our late journey I had not the most distant idea of what has since transpired, and when informed of my father's schemes, believe me, his prohibition would not have made me keep it from you, if I had thought myself warranted in disclosing it; for although I made no doubt that you meant to marry Mary, yet as you never told me so, I had not that authority for interfering which I would otherwise have had. Tell me then frankly if we are to remain the same friends as before this cursed transaction took place?" "With all my heart, Walter. I was myself more to blame than you. As far as I can at present judge, I blame only your father, Parker, and Mary herself." "I wish Henry, neither to meddle nor make between my sister and you, under present circumstances; but to speak candidly, I think she was faulty only in not revealing my father's intentions to you immediately upon our return, as I since understand there were those promises between you, which required her to do so, even in despite of a parent's injunctions. It is true that induced by stories which we have since proved to have no foundation, and that damned letter which would not have imposed upon me for a single moment; she did consent to be left alone with Parker; a thing which she had before constantly refused, and even then, I sincerely believe her principal motive was to inform him that she would never listen to his addresses; as one single hour, and that you yourself know was an early one, was all that she would allow: your entrance, and the scene that followed prevented their exchanging one single syllable! You now know all that passed between them; you are at full liberty to form your own conclusions, and may act as you think proper; but thus much I thought it my duty to acquaint you with." "I am obliged to you, Walter; and as it is a disagreeable subject, I will spare the necessity of reverting to it by telling you what I mean to do. Your father and Parker I will never upbraid with their past conduct. So far I am a Christian; but if to be a good one, requires the additional pledge of not remembering it, there I must stop short: for they have wounded me where I was most vulnerable, and I cannot forget that I have loved. Towards you, and your mother, I entertain the same sentiments as before this happened; and Mary I forgive freely, and wish her all happiness; but if we ever meet again, we meet as common acquaintances."

Richie interfered only to state his intentions towards the nurse ; and Henry upon hearing the tale for the first time, laughed heartily ; and desiring Richie to name whether of the articles in question he meant to buy, declared that he would purchase the other, and send it to her along with his thanks and good wishes.

This conversation having relieved, and partly removed that intolerable oppression and anguish of mind under which he had so long laboured, Henry unbent himself so far as to give Walter to understand upon what terms he stood with Edward Wilson. For this Walter expressed his unfeigned regret, and pressed Henry to permit him to endeavour to soften matters between them by a proper explanation ; but this he positively declined. He said that Ned Wilson had shown himself more petulant, and been more busy than welcome respecting his conduct, and therefore was not entitled to the first overture, for he was determined to be the marrer or maker of his own fortune, and would ask no man's advice concerning the management of it. This led to the motives of Richie Foster's journey. The same vessel was again expected from the French coast ; and in his present frame of mind, Henry made no hesitation in consenting to become a principal party in the transaction. The meeting with the agent, was to be at the house of Lucas the ensuing night ; and Henry pledged himself to be present. After remaining some time with the Fosters, he spent the evening at the house of one of his school-fellows, with whom he had always been upon the most intimate terms, and who was then settled in Whitehaven, and master of a vessel which sailed in the tobacco trade between that port and Virginia.

The ensuing night found Henry true to his agreement at the house of Lucas. Excepting the addition of the Fosters, the meeting consisted of the same junta as before ; and every minutia was satisfactorily arranged in the same manner, and upon the same conditions. Robin Armstrong was present, and once or twice directed his discourse to Henry ; but these advances were received with evident coldness and formality. The meeting broke up at an early hour ; and Henry accompanied the Armstrongs and Fosters to the road which divided the estates of Stockhow and Salter, where he stopped with the intention of leaving them. Upon perceiving this, Robin Armstrong stepped towards him, " Henry Clementson," said he " I own I did not act rightly towards you ; but you will recollect that you never stated to me your intentions respecting Mary. The last time you were in my house, I wished you to leave it : I beg your pardon for that ; and now retract my words. As for Mary, I leave that business entirely to your own judgment, for I have promised before my son and brother, I will never more interfere between you, but as a former friend, and fellow adventurer, if you cannot forget what has passed, it need not force you absolutely to shun my house, or deter you from taking one friendly glass with Walter and your friends here." " Robert Armstrong," said Henry, calmly, " I have explained myself to Walter respecting the business you allude to, as he will have informed you, and I have not since altered my mind. But I bear no animosity ; and as you have thus openly dealt with me, I will with the same frankness accept your invitation." Nothing could have been more agreeable to the

three bystanders than this invitation and acceptance; and thus was Henry again introduced to the abode of Mary Armstrong, after quitting it a few days before in such a paroxysm of passion as threatened a total annihilation of their further acquaintance.

The "womenkind" in the dwelling of Robin Armstrong, had entirely lost that innocent cheerfulness which used to distinguish their evening fire-side conversations. The nurse, deeply buried in mournful recollections of the past, was plying her wheel with silent, though ceaseless assiduity; and Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter, in somewhat a similar mood, were engaged with their needles, when their attention was roused by the sound of approaching footsteps. The entrance of Walter and the two Fosters created but little sensation; and their eyes, after the usual customary greeting, again reverted towards their needful labours, when the creaking latch of the door announced other arrivals. Robin Armstrong was expected, but there seemed by the tread to be another; on turning to see who it was, the surprise of the whole three was electrical, when they saw that other was Henry Clementson.

Robin Armstrong was wise enough to know, that after such a fracas, a first introduction, however wished for, was one of painful embarrassment; and that any allusions in the present case, could not either be to his credit or advantage. In hopes to avert them, he thought it prudent to have the first word, and therefore without any prelude called out, "Come wife, bring us brandy! Henry is here upon his return; and has called in to take a glass with Richie and Tommy for 'auld lang syne;' and I mysel', if left out, will drink a dram to our better acquaintance. Good faith the woman's stupid! Did ye not hear what I said?" However before she had time to obey, Henry went up to her with his wonted kindness of manner, and hoped she was well. To this question he received a suitable return. He then shook hands with the nurse in great good humour. Mary who was sitting close beside her, had not yet spoke; but in extreme confusion still kept her eyes upon her work. The well meaning nurse who possessed great promptness of mind, before quitting the hand of Henry, seized one of Mary's, and joining them, exclaimed, "And ye maun now shake hands here too, laddie! it will be the better for ye baith, whate'er ye do after." Mary seemed more tranquil than passive, and Henry had been less, or more than man, to have refused.

The bottle was brought, the conversation became general, the night was waxing old, and though it was moonlight, it was wet and stormy. Under these circumstances Henry agreed to partake of Walter's bed, and remain till the next day. However, before they would consent to leave the brandy bottle, Richie, Tommy, and their host, were perfectly happy; and Henry and Walter who always refused to drink to such an excess, assisted them to retire to their resting places: but before they themselves followed the example, Henry availed himself of an opportunity to shake hands a second time with Mary, and to assure her that he wished her all happiness; and when their minds were composed, he would be glad of an opportunity to talk with her respecting the late unhappy transactions, that they might adopt such measures for the future, as a cool and true review of the circumstances in which they were placed seemed to demand.

Notwithstanding their copious libations to Bacchus none of the parties were sluggards; they were there stirring with the earliest dawning, and the usual business of the morning being completed, they breakfasted with unwonted satisfaction: and the morning proving fine, Henry departed to the dwelling of his brother-in-law, where his clothes still remained. Being now more satisfied in his mind, his temper was less irritable, and conscious that Edward Wilson's officiousness proceeded from a desire for his real welfare, he felt a strong desire to compromise their difference, if he could do so without sacrificing his own dignity. He was received by the children with transport, and by their parents with kindness, considering the manner in which they had parted. As both parties wished for conciliation, a mutual understanding was soon effected. Edward Wilson admitted that his zeal had made him too hasty; and Henry in return, as far as was necessary, stated the result of his first journey, and the manner in which he became engaged in it; the grounds of his quarrel with Mary Armstrong, and all that had since transpired. He concluded with stating that he had pledged himself to remain a partner in the ensuing speculation, and was determined to fulfil his agreement; but he was equally so to withdraw as soon as it was finished, whatever turn his amour with Mary might eventually take: but however that should terminate, he had some thoughts of striving to forget the past, by making a voyage to America with his friend Captain Harrison, with whom he had already had some conversation on the subject, and who thought he might lay out a part of his cash in such a manner as might render the adventure highly lucrative; as Harrison, who was not overstocked with money, had agreed to allow him interest for his own share, and join with him throughout the whole business. Forseeing that if Henry remained at home, it would be a difficult matter to break off his present habits and connexions, neither of his auditors offered the least objection to his scheme; and his sister told him plainly, that after his return, she would be glad to see him yet marry Mary Armstrong, who she did not think was much to blame, and who she was confident would make a better wife than he deserved. Thus did Henry conceive himself once more upon the road to happiness. What *had* passed, he began to hope might serve to elucidate the predictions of Ellen Anderson; and he was *now* about to engage in what he stood pledged to perform, if not with the good wishes, at least with the tacit permission of his friends. But before I proceed to relate the issue of his intended expedition, it will be necessary to revert to the state and appearance of this part of Cumberland at that period; a recapitulation which will tend to throw some light upon its present state, and explain the facility with which such expeditions were then undertaken, and successfully accomplished.

The West of Cumberland, particularly that part of it which is situate between the Solway Frith and the mountains, must, from its situation, have been more subject to sudden incursions and frequent changes than any other province in the United Kingdom. Whoever will glance over the map of England, will immediately perceive in its isolated and exposed situation, and its distance from the southern provinces which comprised the seat of government and the chief strength of the

empire, the cause of that comparative obscurity in which its early history is enveloped. That Moresby was a Roman station, and that the Norman conquerer granted immense possessions to one of his followers who fixed his residence at Egremont, is generally known; but while every change of importance is minutely related by many eminent writers, it is not only difficult to collect any authentic information relative to so remote a place, but even impossible to determine who were the real masters of it during many eventful changes at different periods. It might have been expected that some one among the many Friars belonging to those early and munificent religious institutions at Saint Bees, and Furness, would have rendered the history of the coast from which they derived their principal maintenance, sufficiently lucid; but it would appear that if ever such records were in existence, they perished along with that princely grandeur which once distinguished those sacred repositories. Indeed the greatest part of what is generally known respecting the localities of this immediate neighbourhood, extends no further than the recollections, or hearsays, of the aged; for even at Arledon, which church was founded in the tenth century, there are no documents in preservation from which the curious inquirer can satisfy himself who enjoyed the rectory previous to the Baxters, a lapse of time scarcely exceeding fourscore years! an obscurity neither unprecedented nor confined to that particular parish.

To swell this account by inferences drawn from the tenures, privileges, &c., by which many of the small estates along this range of coast are, or were, held, is more than I stand pledged to, more than the limits of a simple tale will permit; although the manner of living, and accumulation of property since the early part of the seventeenth century, have undergone changes greater, and in some instances diametrically the reverse, to what has been witnessed in many other parts of the kingdom. Any man possessed of but a small portion of local knowledge will be fully aware of the great deviations which the inclosure of the numerous commons, a measure perhaps vitally important to the increase of the town of Whitehaven, must have affected. Since so recent a date as the period of our tale, 1760, upwards of one thousand four hundred commons have been inclosed in this kingdom. The greater part of Hensingham, Wediker, Frizington, and some other townships, were at that time lying waste; while Cleator, and many more, though perhaps containing more arable acres, were in a state of comparative uncultivation; and to sum up all, Bransty itself, which has since been rented for six guineas per acre, was a desert of whins, occasionally interspersed during the summer months with encampments of those travelling merchants whose particular appellation is far from being accounted a passport of respect, even in this enlightened era of commerce.

This state of affairs, while it had proved favourable to the establishments of those freeholds in which Cumberland abounds so much that in some parts twenty cultivated acres are yet reckoned no inconsiderable property, was fraught with destruction to such as resided upon larger estates, and endeavoured to preserve that open and liberal hospitality which their predecessors had practised, but which the scarcity of cash, and the more expensive manner of living, made their

own confined means totally inadequate to support. This was the real cause which materially circumscribed the possessions of the Ponsonbys, whose original ancestor was barber to the Conqueror, and many other ancient and once opulent families in this neighbourhood; and it was a similar one, much more than the trivial speculations in which he was engaged, which reduced the late Lord of Frizington, the representative of the once wealthy Patrickson, to utter ruin. His latest manorial residence situate at Howth-gill, a small inclosure then totally surrounded by a wild common, is now levelled with the dust; and the greater part of what was once his, along with the possessions of several others, became firmly centered in the firm grasp of the non-resident Lowthers, whose representative is the present Earl of Lonsdale, the Lord Lieutenant of this and the adjoining county.

But although this proved so ruinous to those who had hitherto been upheld by feudal tenures, or other causes which had either ceased to exist or did not prove proportionate to the prosperity of the kingdom, and the additional facility which that increase afforded for permitting the entire property to descend inviolate by the means it afforded for otherwise providing for the younger branches, and thus maintaining the family consequence, it was directly the reverse in regard to small tenements. The extensive commons not only furnished them with the means of subsistence, but when assisted by a life of temperance and frugality, they gradually became possessed of abundance; and the meridian and decline of the seventeenth century was the very era of their splendour. Money was not perhaps abundant, but the expense of festive, or meetings of a different description, were rendered easy by the custom of the district, or the hospitality of their neighbours. The rigs of corn, alias havre, or oats, and the common provided them with necessary food and clothing; and the hempen headrigg, the holm of spring wheat, and the dale of barley, completed their luxuries of dress and festivity. The nights of labour were cheerfully spent in the completion of every member of the family's allotted portion of carding and spinning, and the periods of pleasure were crowned by the quaffing of home-brewed, and the jovial carousals of Christmas. Every farm-house in particular districts knew their diurnal and restricted period for smearing their flocks, and provided accordingly. Then was broached that care-expelling nectar in which every good housewife strove to excel; and then, hear it ye epicures? The well-shafted and greasy whittle, which alternately found its way into the warm and rich vitals of the ponderous blackpudding, and left its sable marks in the dainty and luscious butter-cake, carved out a breakfast worthy of a prince. In fact, without indulging in hyperbolical description, the hospitality and festivities of those days far exceeded even the conception of the present. Every village boasted its summer Sabbath of attraction, and their rural diversions and entertainments were enjoyed with a relish which accorded with that spirit of conviviality which occasioned them. Nor indeed were those customary transactions, which were then considered indispensable for the preservation of their mutual rights and privileges, less plain and perspicuous than comparatively mild and humane in their completion. Thus in perambulating, and pointing out the boundaries of Frizington and Lamplugh, the

precise place was distinguished by a circle of twelve stones placed round one of larger magnitude, a striking emblem of what forms one of the most glorious boasts of every Englishman, and an appropriate proclamation; while it was transmitted to posterity by the distribution of snaps; a mode which served to impress the remembrance of the place upon the minds of the youngsters by the scrambles it caused: a custom which in some parts of the south, is perpetuated by ducking and whipping them.

But this, it must be admitted, was the bright side of the picture. It is well known that in the early part of the seventeenth century it was not unusual for many of the insulated respectable dwelling houses to be annually plundered with astonishing impunity by gangs of desperadoes; while numerous bodies of contraband traders pursued their nefarious avocations in comparative security. It was about the date of this tale, that, owing to the increasing commerce and population of Whitehaven, their suppression became more an object to those in power; and some more active and effectual means were accordingly put in requisition. But as it is well known that at a later date many under agents belonging to the collieries were implicated in the business, their subterraneous entrances allowed such secure and unlimited means of concealment, that seizures of any magnitude were very rarely effected. I hope this digression will be considered neither uninteresting nor irrelevant, as it serves to elucidate some parts of the story to which I now return.

Strong, resolute, and active, Henry Clementson was among the most forward to assist in this second landing in which he was concerned. The night was wet and sleety; but, nevertheless, the work proceeded with equal celerity and success till after midnight, when some surprise and alarm was occasioned by the disappearance of one of the minor assistants. An inquiry was immediately set on foot, and the result was that he had stolen away in rather a suspicious manner. However, as this man did not know anything about their places of concealment, and as the luggage had put on shore several armed men to keep all safe to a certain extent, the landing was completed, everything secured, and after loading a number of horses which they had purposely provided for the occasion, the party, after despatching trusty scouts in different directions, set out upon their return, either to Thistlehill, or such other station in that vicinity as future circumstances might render safe or convenient. It was, however, judged prudent to avoid the road which they had previously intended to pursue, and to despatch Sinclair, and two others, with a couple of horses heavily laden, as a kind of advanced guard, in the direction they finally determined to follow.

As it was concluded that if any information was on foot, no attempt would be made to seize so numerous a gang until they were partly dispersed, and perfectly out of the reach of any assistance from the crew of the vessel, our immediate party determined to avoid their wonted route of crossing the outskirts of the parish of Cleator; and therefore making directly for Hensingham, they began to traverse the common in an easterly direction, in order to gain the nearest road to Arleedon, from whence their journey to Thistlehill had always

been considered perfectly safe. Pressgill was then a lonely alehouse nearly surrounded with uninclosed land; and as the road they were then pursuing passed close by the buildings, Will Sinclair and his two companions, who still preserved their stations, felt inclined to taste the home-brewed of the jolly landlord, but the moment they halted for that purpose, their horses were surrounded and seized by a force so numerous as to put effective resistance out of all question. Will, however, according to his instructions, maintained a war of words sufficiently high to warn the main body of their danger; and then, in order that their companions might avail themselves of the full benefit of such knowledge, the trio watched an opportunity while their captors were unloading their horses in high glee, to make off in an opposite direction. Although his comrades were quickly pursued and brought back in custody of the officers, yet Will finally effected his escape, and the manœuvre had the intended effect of distracting the attention of those concerned in the seizure so much, that the main body of the smugglers wheeling off to the left, passed Keekle further up without molestation. The information, however, was too sure, and the person who gave it too wary, to allow them to escape with impunity. Certain that what they had secured was but a trifling part of the booty they expected, the trusty scouts who had attentively watched the smugglers the whole of their journey, had, by giving the mainbody regular information of their movements, enabled the officers to keep in advance, and as close as they deemed prudent. They soon brought them the necessary intelligence; and, accordingly, leaving a sufficient force to secure what they had captured, they, by crossing in a direct line a space which the other party had been obliged to traverse round, overtook them while ascending the heights of Wediker.

From the very moment of Sinclair's seizure, his more numerous followers had calculated upon being attacked, and had therefore made the best dispositions for defending their contraband property which circumstances admitted of. The horses were urged forward by those least able, or least inclined for vigorous resistance; while the most bold and resolute were continually upon the alert, and ready for defence at any point upon which the attack might be made. It was not to be expected that a party of eight or ten stout and resolute men who had considerable property at stake, would be completely overawed by twice their own number, and therefore those amongst the assailants who first reached the smugglers, observing by their resolutely keeping together that a desperate resistance was intended, after calling upon them to surrender in the king's name without effect, thought it prudent to wait for the junction of the principal body. During this time, the party bent upon fighting kept between those who were urging the horses forward and their enemies, without exchanging a single word, and it was not until the whole of the collected force rushed upon them, that they took the least notice of their evident intention; but the very instant the attack commenced, they availed themselves of the confusion which in a rainy and cloudy night is inseparable from such an assault, to mix amongst their adversaries in such a manner as to make it extremely dangerous for those who possessed fire arms to avail themselves of the advantages these destructive weapons generally afford; and

perfectly aware of this, whenever the smugglers could discern a blunderbuss, or pistol, an effort was immediately made to knock down the person, or render useless the arm which held it. Notwithstanding the superiority of numbers on one side, the dexterity and prowess of such men as Clementson, and the two Fosters, could, under such circumstances, scarcely fail of ensuring a speedy victory to their own party. In the present case the event was not long dubious. In a very few minutes the most resolute of the assailants were disabled, or stretched on the turf; while the more timid fled down the hill with much greater good will than they had before ascended it; and their adversaries satisfied that they had done enough to prevent further pursuit, quitted the scene of combat. They did not however draw off without carrying along with them evident marks of the desperate affray in which they had been engaged. Independent of the bruises which all of them had more or less received from the bludgeons of their opponents, three, or four, among whom was Tommy Foster, were deeply and severely wounded by the swords or dirks with which many of their assailants were armed; and on their retreat, Robin Armstrong received a wound, which eventually proved fatal, from one of the few straggling shots which some of the most active of the defeated party were enabled to discharge before the victors had receded beyond the reach of their guns. Divested of this consideration, the affair was altogether one of the most serious and unpleasant nature. If none of the officers were killed outright, the probability was, that some of them were disabled for life; and at any rate, such had been the nature of the contest, that it was sure the most rigorous inquiry and subsequent proceedings would be immediately instituted; while in addition to these disagreeable reflections, the bleeding wounds of their companions excited the most sickening and appalling apprehensions among the more fortunate victors. The time, the place, and the recent circumstances which had occurred, however, allowed no time for unavailing pity, or indecision. One of the fleetest horses was directly unloaded, and Walter springing upon his back, lost no time in setting off in quest of medical assistance; while the wounded men were conveyed with all possible expedition to Salter, where, after seeing their perilous cargo deposited in supposed safety, Richie Foster and Henry Clementson lost no time in joining them.

The once jovial dwelling of Robin Armstrong now presented a scene as disconsolate as the reader can imagine. His wife now witnessed the complete fulfilment of what she had long dreaded, and often foreboded; prognostications which in such cases, do not at all tend to lessen those evils which they have anticipated, and the grief of Walter and Mary was aggravated by the uncertainty attending the former's future safety. Tommy Foster affected to consider his own situation as not at all dangerous, but his father and friends were of a different opinion; and the feelings of Henry Clementson himself, though not roused by those ties of relationship to any of the wounded men, to which some of the others were subject, were perhaps the most acute of any of the whole party. He now indeed beheld a fearful consummation of nearly the worst that Edward Wilson could possibly have represented to him. He saw at one glance the grief and peril which the act he had both permeditated and participated in,

had occasioned both to the innocent and the guilty ; and the uncertainty attending the rencounter with the officers of the revenue, joined to the consciousness that he was too well known to escape detection, seemed to leave him no alternative but flight or concealment, either of which included the absolute necessity of entrusting his concerns, if indeed the information extended not to the total loss of their stock, to the honesty of these initiated in schemes of dishonesty.

The reproaches of his brother-in-law, the grief of his sister, the blood of those who might perish by an imprudent act of which he had been the most powerful abettor, and the sorrow of her whom he loved and must leave, leave, when the spring tide of returning tenderness was about to remove the barrier which had lately threatened to divide them, all seemed at once to rise up in judgment against him. The die was however of his own choosing, it was cast, and there remained nothing except the speedy adoption of the most efficient means to evade, or extenuate the evils which it had entitled. Feeling the necessity of acting, as well for himself, as for those whom circumstances had deprived of the power of choosing for themselves, he held an immediate consultation with Lucas, Robinson, and Sinclair, who had joined them before their arrival at Thistlehill ; and their deliberations were equally prompt and decisive. None of these three had borne any part in the conflict, and were in hopes that nothing to affect their personal liberty could be brought against them ; and therefore they determined to lose no time in adopting means to find out what damage their adversaries had met with, and what their friends had to apprehend ; and Robinson assured Henry that if concealment was unavoidable, their comrades at Salter should not only have sufficient warning to provide for their safety, but that he could conceal them in a part of his own house where all the constables in Whitehaven could not find them. These were all circumstances as favourable as Henry could have anticipated, and he lost no time in conveying the intelligence to Salter, where the surgeon had then arrived, and who had directed that Tommy Foster and Robin Armstrong, the former of whom was wounded in the head, and the latter in the intestines, should both be kept perfectly quiet, otherwise there was reason to fear the most unfavourable result.

The complete repulse of so formidable a body could not fail to alarm all those who were anxious for the suppression of this contraband dealing, particularly as the defeated party were, as is usual in such like cases, eager to conceal their disgrace by magnifying the number of their adversaries. Indeed those who had acted upon the principle that "discretion is the better part of valour," found some difficulty in removing their less prudent comrades, several of whom were severely bruised and maimed, from the scene of action to Pressgill, where those whom they had left to secure the booty they had previously acquired received them with considerable chagrin, as in case of their success, they would have participated equally in the spoils, and had considered themselves certain of no inconsiderable dividend, instead of the scanty portion arising from their share of the sum which the three horses and their loads could possibly produce, and which was now all that they had to look forward to. This disastrous termination of an expedition,

for the success of which they had been extremely anxious, disconcerted them so much, that when they had pressed the landlord's nags, and clog wheeled carts into the King's service for the conveyance of his lamed subjects, one of their prisoners, and the person who had given the first information, had both disappeared, and it appeared more owing to his own inolination, than any strict watch over him, that the remaining captive, an old man who had numbered threescore years and ten at the shortest reckoning, accompanied them to Whitehaven, where they arrived early in the morning completely crest fallen. The importance, however, necessarily attached to a resistance so daring, caused the adoption of the most vigorous measures. All the magistrates in the immediate neighbourhood were summoned to attend the depositions of those engaged in the conflict, and the examination of the prisoner; but notwithstanding these proceedings, the chain of collective evidence seemed far from being complete. The absence of the man who had attended the landing, who, it appeared, had been induced to give information by the hope of an immense booty, but did not choose to hazard his personal safety further by appearing to support the character he had assumed when the prospect of adequate remuneration was so greatly diminished, tended to destroy all hopes of obtaining evidence sufficiently accurate and conclusive to warrant these severe measures, which those who had suffered in the affray naturally wished to be adopted, as positive oaths could only be given to the identity of those they had captured; and these persons had neither attempted resistance, nor could their connexion with those who had, be satisfactorily proved, unless the remaining captive chose to impeach his confederates. Every subsequent proceeding of importance seemed therefore to depend upon his evidence, and he was accordingly brought up for examination by two of the officers in whose custody he had remained, and who had completely failed in several attempts which they had made to elicit any information from him respecting the business in which he had been engaged. The prisoner had not the smallest appearance of dejection, or irresolution, about him. A bold and open forehead, and a countenance in which confirmed health, and unwonted animation, seemed to triumph over the evident tokens of advanced years, and a life of labour and fatigue, were all that distinguished him from the generality of middle sized-men. To the respective interrogatories of the presiding magistrate, he replied, that his name was Thomas Elliot, that he resided at Whillymoor, and was three score and sixteen years old last April. When questioned respecting his trade, or profession, he answered, that he had been a soldier during the early, and better part of his life. He had served as a drummer on the days of Blenheim, Ramillies, and Malplaquet, under the Duke of Marlborough; had first carried a musket under the Duke of Ormond, and had concluded his military career under the Duke of Cumberland. "Truly Tom," rejoined the querist, "thou hast assuredly been born on the first of April, otherwise the old saying had not been so perverted in thy case. Who were the men that escaped? and whose horses are those which were taken along with thee?" "They were Tom Lucas's, your honour." "Good faith," said Mr. Plainway, who was one of the magistrates present, and who liked not the simple

facts which Elliot made so little scruple of disclosing to the seeming prejudice of his old acquaintance, "the old birds had not so easily been caught with chaff, if his bondage had not been to his own liking. Hark thee, Tom! did Lucas lend thee his horses purposely, or did'st thou turn smuggler with them on thine account?" "No, truly, your honour; far be it from me to say that my friend Lucas was privy to any attempt to defraud his Majesty, God bless him!" "So then it appears that you, an old soldier, are willing to bear the sole blame, and incur the sole penalty attached to such an attempt;" said the presiding justice. "But it will not do. It is too stale a trick. The imprisonment of an old beggarly rascal from whom nothing can be got, shall not shield the owner of the horses." "Beggarly rascal!" cried Elliot, in seeming astonishment. "What does your honour mean! I crave to know wherefore I am detained here, and what is my offence? But yonder is Tom Lucas and Sinclair! I will swear to the men who robbed and plundered us, and hope your Worships will be found ready to grant us full justice, and ample recompence." "Yes, I will try! But if the assurance of such knaves is taken into account, I doubt the balance will prove deficient. Here Clerk, make out this fellow's mittimus, and then he will look after his abettors." "Directly your Honour. How shall I word the order for his commitment? shall I say, taken along with casks containing so many gallons of brandy or gin, or will contraband spirits do for both?" "Certainly. But stop, it may be as well to give everything its proper name. Do the casks contain brandy or gin, fellow?" "Neither, your Worship. Me deal in a forbidden trade! me an old soldier! your Honour is joking, surely?" "What is the meaning of this, Griffiths?" said the presiding Magistrate, turning to one of those who had been engaged in the expedition. "Have you examined the contents of the casks taken?" "No," said the person to whom the question was directed, "I have not. The difficulty of escorting the wounded men, and the short rest which fatigue rendered indispensable, hath hitherto prevented me from doing so. But I question not that such examination has been made." "See to that immediately!" was the angry retort, "as this fellow does not seem inclined to spare us any trouble." "Me, your Worship," said Elliot, drily, "I am sure if your Honour had asked me that question long ago, I would have told you. The casks, your Honour, are a serious loss and disappointment to me, and the water is much wanted in Whillymoor at this time when one half of the sheep are either scabbed or rotten." "Water! what dost thou mean, man? Do not the casks contain smuggled spirits?" "Smuggled spirits, indeed! They are full of as pure sea water as ever flowed up the Solway Frith."

This was indeed true. The suspicious departure of one of their assistants, was a circumstance which fully warranted some little precaution; and half a dozen empty casks being filled at the beach, they were carefully bunged up, and placed upon those three horses which were destined to precede the main body. When captured, it was by no means the business of those who attended them to disclose what their lading consisted of; and the alarm occasioned by the desperate conflict which immediately ensued, had prevented any particular ex-

amination, as none of the attacking party made the least doubt of the contents being either Brandy or Hollands. The mortification of those who had hoped to derive some benefit by the capture, was not a little augmented by Elliot's "hoping they had not wasted any of the precious liquid," and by Lucas's application for warrants, for the apprehension of those who had first stopped, and detained his horses; and as neither Sinclair nor Elliot pretended to have heard them declare that they acted in the King's name, it was necessary for those concerned to swear to that fact, before he was satisfied. That however being soon done, he declared himself content to abandon his charge without insisting upon damages, as he was too loyal a subject to be over scrupulous when his Sovereign was concerned. And Tom Elliot observed, "As that was the case, he who had fought for his Majesty's father, and his glorious predecessor, Queen Anne, could not grudge one night's captivity when the interests of the present King had been supposed to be at stake. He would therefore be content to throw his late durance into the scale of his former services in a cause for which he had so often fought; but he hoped, that their Honours would be pleased to bear it in mind, as their affidavits might assist in procuring a pension towards supporting him in his old age." As nothing to warrant any detention was discovered, Lucas and his confederates reloaded the casks with apparently as much care as if they had contained real Cogniac; but Elliot, I believe, never received a pension, although he actually danced with every woman within the tent upon Arlecdon fair hill, at the great age of one hundred and three years! Upon which singular occasion he exhibited the vigour and agility of a middle-aged man, although he died suddenly the succeeding year.

The deliberations of the magistrates ended in an agreement to write to the Lord Lieutenant for a party of soldiers to assist the civil authorities in commencing a strict search, and endeavouring to find out, and bring some of the daring delinquents to justice; and this news, which was fully as favourable as the gang could have hoped for, being speedily conveyed to the head quarters, it was resolved to remove as much of their stock as they judged necessary before the arrival of the military. This was successfully performed the three or four succeeding nights; but the dangerous state of Tommy Foster and Robin Armstrong caused a sorrow and dejection both among their relatives and the most feeling and thinking part of their confederates, which no pecuniary advantage could alleviate. The youth and constitution of Foster, the doctor expected, might enable him to struggle through the dangerous fever occasioned by the inflammation of his wound; but of Robin Armstrong his hopes were entirely extinct; a mortification had taken place in his bowels, and death, death speedy, and both wholly unlooked and unprepared for, was the inevitable result. The feelings of Henry Clementson during this alarming crisis it is impossible to describe. The only mitigation of sorrow the most poignant, and regret the most bitter, which he experienced, was, while arduously employed in the removal and safety of that illicit and pernicious cargo which had occasioned so much misery. During his short and necessary visits to Edward Wilson's, he concealed not the remorse he felt for his past conduct. The deplorable state of

his two companions had effected an alteration in his behaviour which no misfortunes of his own could have produced. That haughty and determined spirit which would not have shrunk from the endurance of its own sufferings however acute, was softened by the reflection that he had been a means of planning and executing those measures which independent of all other considerations, would probably be the means of consigning to an early tomb that bold and volatile youth, who had earned his esteem by the frank, and open-hearted conduct which upon all occasions, distinguished his behaviour; and had likewise marked for the grave, a man, who however he might despise those selfish principles by which his conduct was generally regulated, was nevertheless too dearly allied to those he loved, to make his fate a subject of indifference, even if it had proceeded from a cause which could not by the most remote inference have been imputed to him; but when this was by no means the case, he felt himself in some degree accessory to his death. It was true that both of those who had suffered most by it, had borne no inconsiderable share in the conflict; but it was more particularly to the prowess of Clementson, and the father and brother-in-law of the wounded men, that the rescue was owing; and therefore the consequent random discharge of the firearms which the defeated party could collect and discharge in sufficient time to revenge the beating they had received, and lessen the triumph of the victors, might be said to bring the consequence of such resistance more home to them, than to any other. These were conclusions which made but little (if any) impression, upon either Richie Foster himself, or any of the gang, excepting Henry. Far from imputing blame to any of their confederates, their grief displayed itself in venting execrations upon the cowardly rascals who had fired; but their apathy in this respect, did not tend to lessen the sorrow of his more refined and susceptible mind. Excepting that limited portion of time appropriated to such rest as incessant fatigue rendered indispensable, all the time he could possibly spare, was devoted to the attendance of his unfortunate companions, whom he watched over with an interest and assiduity as intense as if his own hopes of happiness was involved in the issue of the melancholy scenes which surrounded him. On the morning of the eighth day after the affray, suspense was superseded by certainty. The partial recovery of Tommy Foster was no longer doubtful, but Robin Armstrong was evidently dying, dying too with the full consciousness of the errors of his past life, both unrepented of, and unatoned for. The most prominent points in his character through life had been somewhat similar to the distinguishing traits of that wily animal which he seemed to resemble in the close of it. During the whole of his illness, not the slightest murmur escaped him. Throughout that dreadful period of uncertainty, the close of which was to bring death or life to him, he evinced a calmness and tranquillity as singular as surprising; and when he heard, and felt, that all hope was at an end, he waited for the final summons with an apathy which greatly shocked his wife and children. To them even the horrors of a death-bed repentance had been far more consolatory; as that goodness and mercy upon which the very best Christians place their chief dependance, cannot, however free and unlimited, be supposed to avail

those who are unwilling to implore it ; and Robin Armstrong neither by word nor deed, neither by his own desire, nor by the solicitations of others, was willing to permit, far less to request that pious assistance which essentially contributes to remove those uncertainties and apprehensions which so awful a change naturally creates. But while he manifested this indifference towards those means which through the medium of his Redeemer can alone reconcile the most perfect creature to his Creator, the case was far otherwise in regard to his fellow mortals. Of his wife, his children, and the two Fosters, he took a tender and affectionate leave ; and the manly fortitude he evinced during these most trying interviews would have been infinitely honourable to him, if it had been grounded upon that sure foundation which neither death nor eternity itself can attempt to shake. Towards Henry Clementson too, who independent of those who were connected with him by the ties of relationship was the only person present, he expressed the utmost kindness. He thanked him for the preservation of his wife, and for the attention he had shown to him during his illness ; begged that he would forgive him all that had passed respecting his daughter, and hoped that as he had been the sole means of interrupting their happiness, they would be thoroughly reconciled to each other, and experience many, very many years of happiness together. His worldly affairs were easily arranged. He left his wife the full liberty of acting as she thought best for the interests of their children, but suggested the propriety of their removal from Salter as soon as everything could be satisfactorily settled with their landlord ; a thing which Mrs. Armstrong had before fully resolved upon.

The week which succeeded the funeral of Robin Armstrong was one in which Henry found no relief from the cares and fatigues he had recently undergone. To avoid the danger to which he was exposed from his suspected share in the late transactions, Jonah Parker had removed to Whitehaven, where the arrival of the soldiers, and the daily search they were everywhere making, was the source of so much uneasiness to the gang, that they determined to remove the greatest part of their stock eastwards, the first favourable opportunity ; and as the spring was now far advanced, his agricultural concerns, and the recent death of his father, rendered the presence of Walter at Salter indispensable, Henry's attendance upon this expedition, both on his own, and the Armstrongs' account, was absolutely necessary. It proved one of infinite danger and fatigue. Notwithstanding their numerous connexions, and complete knowledge of the country through which they travelled, it required all the address and activity of the smugglers to preserve their lading ; and this they could not have effected, had not the bold and resolute characters of those with whom they associated rendered any attack upon them extremely dangerous, except the assailants were too numerous and well armed to put resistance out of the question. Tommy Foster was scarcely able to travel with them, much less to render them any assistance in case of attack ; and in Henry, the society of Walter who had before accompanied him, was likewise wanting ; and nothing but the peril to which they were constantly exposed, could have roused him to such exertion as to prevent that despondency which too often attends such an uncomfortable and un-

enviable state of mind. After many hair-breadth escapes, they finally succeeded in again reaching the dwelling of Richie Foster, where leaving Tommy to the care of his mother, Richie and his companions lost no time in proceeding to the place of general rendezvous. The two days they were necessitated to tarry at this place were by no means pleasant ones to Henry Clementson. He had no relish for that kind of gaping curiosity with which as the conqueror of Fardy Douglas, he was regarded during their stay. Fardy was himself present, and rather wranglesome withal; but did not choose to accept the challenge for a second trial which he provoked Henry to give him; and Richie having at length accomplished the business which had detained them, was anxious to reach home with the utmost expedition.

The exertion which Tommy Foster had used in order to reach home, was far beyond what his strength could sustain without injury; and his father upon his return, found him so much worse, that he was no longer able to leave the house. Henry's stay there was necessarily short; and when he took leave of Tommy, he felt a strong presentiment that they would never meet again. This feeling seemed to be mutual; for when Henry was ready to depart, Tommy grasped his hand for some time without speaking. After a pause of some length, during which both of them seemed overpowered by their own reflections, Tommy broke the distressing silence "Farewell, Henry," said he. "God knows how this may end, but I think we shall never meet again upon earth, our acquaintance has not been long, nor have we been much together; but setting kindred aside, there is no man living I esteem half so much. I know your heart was never altogether with us in the business which has, I fear, cost me my life; and I now believe your scruples were entitled to more weight than I was formerly inclined to allow. I am, as you know Harry, but a foolish fellow to set up for a preacher, yet I cannot help advising you to settle your affairs as soon as you can, forget that you were ever a smuggler, and, do not be offended at my freedom, marry Mary Armstrong, and it shall be the last wish of her dying cousin that you may be long happy together." "I hope Tommy that your present gloomy thoughts may prove premature; but as I wish not to deceive you, I will not deny that I think you are in considerable danger. Since that fatal night I have not known a moment's happiness; nor, should your illness prove fatal, do I think I will ever forget it. Regarding you as a kind and disinterested friend, I assure you, that as soon as I can clear myself, this is the last time I will be concerned in such traffic. My present purpose is to go abroad for a few months, and then if we all be spared, it will be time enough to consider what is best to be done. Farewell, Tommy. If you live, we will shortly meet again; if not, may that meeting not be far distant; but if Providence order it otherwise, you will still live in my tenderest remembrance." The tear that stole down the manly cheek of Henry bore witness to the sincerity of his words, and afraid of trusting his feelings any longer to the scrutiny of others, he hastily shook hands with Richie, and departed immediately.

There are many to whom this kind sympathy for the fate of others is not altogether unknown, who seek to dissipate all remembrance of it,

by seizing with avidity every opportunity of plunging into scenes either bustling or interesting enough to absorb their immediate attention; whilst others are inclined to cherish such feelings, as containing within themselves the seeds of self-improvement, and of principles which do honour to human nature. Although in the particular case of Henry Clementson, his sympathy for the young and aspiring Foster was mingled with the bitterest regret by the recollection that he had borne at least an equal share in that transaction which was the unfortunate cause of his present hopeless situation, yet he felt no desire to extinguish either his sorrow or the compunction which was occasioned by reflecting upon his own conduct; but choosing that in the troop where his meditations were the least liable to interruption, he gave free indulgence to those considerations which the dangers he had escaped, and his present critical engagements naturally suggested. "Yes," said he, mentally, "I see my error when it is too late, and might myself have as easily been the victim of my imprudence, as either Tommy Foster or his uncle. But if it be too late to remedy the misfortunes which have already befallen them, their fate has taught me a lesson I shall never forget. If I arrive safely at home, I will free myself with convenient speed of all further concern in this cursed traffic, and endeavour to regain that station from which I have descended, and the confidence of those whose better counsels I have so wantonly disregarded." With these and similar reflections he beguiled the tedious journey homewards. That punctuality which had distinguished all their dealings, was not wanting upon this occasion. At the place and time specified before their departure, they found Robinson waiting for them. His eastern companions retired back again, and Henry and the party which accompanied him, arrived safely at Saltar. According to the resolutions he had previously formed he was now indefatigably employed in adjusting his affairs; and in a few days, by the advantageous offers he made to his companions, to whom he made no secret of his intentions, he was enabled to declare to Edward Wilson, that both Walter Armstrong and himself had done with smuggling for ever.

The afternoon upon which this important settlement took place, Edward Wilson and his wife paid a visit of condolence to Mrs. Armstrong, and their regret for the past, was succeeded by the warm congratulations of the whole party upon the secession of Walter and Henry from a pursuit so often attended with the most pernicious consequences. It was at the dwelling of Robinson that everything was finally adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. Henry had been a considerable gainer during the short period he had been engaged with the gang, and was inclined to act with the greatest liberality towards all of them. He said that as he meant to go abroad for some time, his further connexion with them was impossible; but he felt bound to declare, that they had acted with the greatest probity and honour towards him, and he hoped that none of them would consider their depositories less safe than if his whole property was involved in the disclosure of anything to their disadvantage. To this the whole party cheerfully assented; and the two friends quitted the meeting with a firm resolution never to be present at a similar one.

Before they reached Salter, Walter asked Henry "what he now thought of the predictions of Ellen Anderson? For my own part," continued he, "I confess my scepticism is much shaken. You remember the latter part of her story respecting Grace Foster; I have inquired into that part of her tale, and have reason to believe it is true. A young woman of that name, who was aunt to my uncle Richie, came into this neighbourhood; and I have been told disappeared in a very suspicious manner. It was imagined about here that she had returned into her own country; while her friends at Bewcastle heard a very plausible story, the truth of which was never properly inquired into, that she was drowned on her passage to Liverpool. It is a fact that the very boldest of the party we have quitted do not choose to frequent Thistlehill after gloaming, except in company; I have done so more than once, and to tell you the truth, I would have once laughed at any person who had ventured to disclose what I have myself, witness without being able to account for in a feasible manner." "I know not what to make of it," replied Henry. "It is a dark and impenetrable business, altogether. I can only observe, that in addition to what you already know, I have always felt an unaccountable despondency respecting the final accomplishment of those predictions which equally affect your sister. The success I have hitherto met with, and all that has since occurred between Mary and me, does not tend either to confirm or falsify the truth of the prophecy. My present resolution under such circumstances is to go abroad. Before doing so, I will endeavour to come to a final understanding with Mary. If all be well, and I return uninjured, I will be justified in the hope that recent events have averted those misfortunes which were never clearly and absolutely represented as unavoidable. If otherwise, 'come what come may,' I would rather seem to meet it half-way, than live in perpetual dread of its arrival."

A messenger of unpleasant tidings had preceded their arrival home. Tommy Foster was no more, and his afflicted parents had lost no time in acquainting their relatives with the melancholy event. Walter and Henry both instantly determined to be present at the funeral; but notwithstanding the love which as cousins had always subsisted between Tommy and Mary, her delicate state of health, originally owing to the fatigue and mental inquietude she had lately endured, as well as the great distance, rendered her attendance impossible. It is not necessary to follow the two friends to the eastern confines of the county. Their journey, while it gave a perceptible pleasure to Richie, who bore his loss with all the feelings of a father, and the firmness of a man, was attended with no circumstance worthy of notice.

Henry's arrangements with his old school-fellow Captain Harrison were soon completed; and while the vessel was getting ready for sea his time was occupied in preparations for the voyage. As the day drew near, both his sister and her husband would have gladly dissuaded him from an undertaking which had at first met their decided approbation. But the die was cast, to go he was determined; and consequently whenever the subject was mentioned, he defended the resolution he had formed by reverting to the transactions of the last six months. "My time is now unemployed," said he, "and such a voyage, while I

is perfectly legal and honourable, will deface the remembrance of more recent events. The success, good or ill, which attends it, and the changes which must occur during my absence, will infallibly point out what measures it will be most proper for me to pursue in future, while a life of ease and indolence, neither suits my age nor disposition." To such arguments as these Edward Wilson could make no objection; but he would gladly have turned the current of Henry's thoughts towards another object. The evening preceding his departure was wild and stormy, but its fury disturbed not the domestic tranquillity of the farmer's fire side. His wife, whether listening, or bearing a part in the conversation between her husband and brother, was busy with her needle; while her rosy children of different ages, were innocently amusing themselves by alternately endeavouring to attract that attention from their delighted parents, which, by the reciprocal affection it illustrates, affords equal satisfaction to those who solicit, and those who bestow it. It was not however such a scene of domestic felicity as Mrs. Wilson had often witnessed. Upon other occasions she had loved to watch those blended looks of delight and wonder, or that tearful sympathy so expressively styled the "joy of grief," which in their most natural and beautiful colourings were alternately pictured in the countenances of his infantine audience, while Henry, in terms most familiar to their youthful comprehensions, related the exploits of Robin Hood, Tom Thumb, or his namesake, the gigantic Hickathrift; explained the miracles of the Ark, and the Tower of Babel; or recited the stories of Chevy Chase, and the Babes in the Wood, all of which ornamented different parts of the clean whitewashed wall that lent additional polish to the brass tea-kettle, candle-sticks, &c., which stood, or hung, in the interior of their comfortable sitting-room. The evening in question, was, notwithstanding the pleasing vivacity of her children, of a far more sombre cast. His books for reading, or noting down the transactions of the day, lay not upon the green cover of her husband's desk; and even the bottle of sparkling ale which stood upon the table between him and her brother, seemed to speak of the latter's speedy departure from them. Edward Wilson, though not distinguished by any striking or superior talents, was, nevertheless a man of a cheerful disposition, and a strong and correct understanding. Far from complaining of his lot, or undervaluing the blessings he possessed, he thought himself one of the happiest men living; an opinion which upon proper occasions he was by no means shy of expressing. Though justly displeased with Henry's late conduct, he still loved him both as a brother and friend, and now when Robin Armstrong was no more, the high opinion he had formed of Mary's beauty and merit, and the esteem with which he regarded her mother and Walter, made him extremely anxious to see them united. "Henry," said he, "I confess that now when the necessity for hazarding such a voyage no longer exists, I would much rather you would relinquish it; for why should you continue to risk a happiness, which seems to court your acceptance. Your own fortune, added to the sum you have latterly ventured so much to obtain, is quite sufficient to make you as comfortable as I myself am; and tell me who is more so? The storm that beats with impotent rage against the

roof of our dwelling disturbs us only by the sympathy it excites for those who are necessarily exposed to its fury ; but you are none of those. The soldier, or sailor, trained to delight in dangers by sea and land, may not justly appreciate the calm joys of domestic life, because the vicissitudes to which they are subject, may forbid the hope of their ever experiencing them with certainty ; but to you, a daily witness to the happiness that awaits the contented enjoyment of them, the prospect must be widely different ; weigh their toilsome wanderings with love and Mary Armstrong. Contrast the dangers to which they are perpetually exposed with the comforts of your own fire-side, and tell me, if there be any room for hesitating which to choose ? Do you thirst after employment, or riches ? I will tell you of the most likely path to obtain them. Suppose yourself situated as I am at present, look at those smiling innocents, and ask your own heart if the richest nobles of the land can have the same affection for their offspring as those who have endured the tedious days, the restless nights, and the thousand little solitudes which endear the helpless infant to its parents, and distinguishes it as a part of their own being : while depending upon the attention of hirelings, their children brought into their presence to gratify the caprice of the moment, and taken away when they are conceived to be troublesome, interests them little, except as beings entitled to, and sharing their affections, as the inheritors of their titles, wealth, and honours. Once fancy yourself a father, and you will no longer despair of employment the most arduous and interesting. Your children generally present to your sight, and always in your thoughts, will furnish you with never-failing sources of labour and reflection ; the task of forming and cultivating their minds, the thought that you are accountable in a great measure for their future welfare, the changes that a few years will indubitably bring, their own improvement, and your decline, till death closes the scene, and those who survive close your eyes, and follow you to the grave. When all these blessings may be yours, what need have you to hazard them by wandering in quest of others ? Instead of a voyage to America, let us have a jolly wedding, and in lieu of a sorrowful parting, a merry christening ; yet if you are determined to go, I cannot help it ; but whenever the angry elements seem to conspire for your destruction, think not that those whom you have left behind, however personally secure from their rage, will feel indifferent to the destruction they may occasion others. Yes, Henry, when the storm shall beat, and the wind whistle around our cottage, we will think of you, nor retire to rest without offering a fervent prayer for your safe return."

To language like this, Henry was by no means insensible, yet it could not shake the settled resolution he had formed. Another day only intervened between this attempt of Edward Wilson's to alter his determination, and the night fixed for his departure ; and he passed the greatest part of it at Salter. Of Mrs. Armstrong and the nurse he took an affectionate leave on leaving the house ; but Walter and Mary accompanied him a short distance on his return. As they drew near the place previously fixed upon for their parting, Walter walked hastily forward that he might not disturb their parting interview. During

the period which had elapsed since the death of Robin Armstrong, the lovers had been perfectly reconciled; but owing to those events which it is needless to revert to, their meetings had not been of that secret and midnight description which generally characterise similar ones in this neighbourhood. The left hands of the youthful pair were, like the dearest feelings of their hearts, firmly linked together, while the right arm of Henry encircled the waist of Mary; and in this manner they arrived at the stile whereon they were to part. Having received from her tremulous hand a locket which contained a plait of her hair, and in return placed upon the fore finger of her left hand a ring which he had brought for that purpose, he fixed his eyes upon her face, to bid her a final farewell. The rose which had recently bloomed in her cheek, had assumed a tint somewhat different, but not the less interesting. If the health and animation which had once revelled there, and added its richest dye to the full lustre of beauty, was no longer visible, that chastened delicacy by which it was succeeded, accorded more with those softened glances which betrayed the sorrow and affection of the spirit within. "Mary," said he, despondingly, "we must now part, perhaps for ever. This time and place admit not of many words, but though they be few, yon sky which canopies the whole earth, and he who rules it, are witnesses of their sincerity; and till we meet again, let them be ever present in your remembrance. Mark me then, Mary, if the fault rests not with you, through life, and in death, I will be true to you. Give me an equal promise, and I will depart happy and satisfied. The days of our separation shall be gilded by my hopes of returning in safety; and when we meet, that ring, removed to another finger, shall unite us for ever." The tears that streamed down the cheeks of Mary, did not at such a moment deprive her of the power to reply. "Yes, Henry," said she with energy, "the pledge you require, I can cheerfully give. Let the same power you have invoked, likewise witness my words. Through life, and in death, I will be yours only." He clasped her to his breast, pressed his lips to hers, and quitted her without daring to hazard a second look. "Walter, farewell! Our former conversation renders many words unnecessary, farewell." "Farewell!" replied Walter, as he wrung his hand with a feeling of bitter sorrow, which the peculiar circumstances under which they parted extorted from him, circumstances which had combined to give an interest to it far beyond what the practised seaman or his friends can ever experience; as independent of other considerations, the frequent recurrence, and necessity of such partings, cannot fail to detract from that importance with which an inexperienced landsman is apt to regard them.

The Balfour, of Liverpool, the vessel of which John Harrison, the school-fellow of Henry Clementson, was master, made a speedy and prosperous voyage across the Atlantic; the captain being well acquainted with the trade, was not long in exchanging his cargo to considerable advantage; and availing himself of the first favourable opportunity for returning, he arrived within two or three days sail of Liverpool without meeting with any material accident. From the moment of his arrival on board, Henry, sensible of the awkward situation in which he stood, and the jealousy with which those who

cannot exactly be called either seamen or common passengers are often regarded both by the crew and ownery, was fully resolved to endeavour to lull the remembrance of the past by making himself as useful as possible. The continual change of scene, and the pleasure he derived from the voyage, had hitherto exceeded his most sanguine expectations. The greatest cordiality subsisted between him and the captain, who was both a bold and skilful sailor, and a well-informed and humane man; and with the crew, most of whom were thorough seamen, and fully sensible of the difference between a good, and a bad master, the kindness of his manners, joined to his readiness to assist or oblige them upon all occasions, made him an universal favourite. At times, when secure of interruption, he would gaze upon the trinket, which, suspended by a black silk ribbon round his neck, he wore like a talisman in his bosom, and give full scope to those feelings which the sight of it naturally occasioned; and whether it arose from the danger of losing her upon whose love rested all his hopes of worldly happiness, or some surviving recollections detrimental to his peace of mind, or both united; he always upon such occasions, felt a withering presentiment of final disappointment. Full of all these visionary chimeras, which a vigorous and disturbed mind is so fruitful in engendering to its own torment, Henry Clementson sought that temporary repose, which the midnight hour, and his own distempered ideas, rendered doubly welcome; but those images which he had conjured up to disturb him while awake, seemed to return with accumulated force during the hours of repose. For some time his slumbers were calm and tranquil. The days of his infancy, his youth, and early manhood passed in calm and sound succession, until Mary Armstrong stood before him in all the pride of youth and beauty, and then his dreams became a confused chaos of tumultuous reminiscences; yet still were those upon whom the earth had closed for ever, most prominent in the group of imagery. The death of Mrs. Steele, the half-denounced predictions of Ellen Anderson, her tall and skinny figure, her singular dress, and all the dreadful incidents interwoven in her unhappy story, seemed to rise in sad review before him. Then followed the conflict with the officers, and the untimely death of Robin Armstrong. His parting with Tommy Foster when living, and his journey with Walter to his funeral. Yet, all these were nothing calculated to rouse the dormant tempest in his soul, like the scenes which immediately succeeded them. He thought he beheld Mary Armstrong, all interesting as she appeared to him when last they parted. Her form, by slow, yet perceptible degrees, waxed thinner; yet her countenance still retained that convalescent glow, which like the pearls of Balsora, serve but to render more conspicuous the rapid decline within; while her eyes, those living lustres of the human form, seemed to glow with a brightness too analogous to the short-lived brilliancy of a dissolving luminary, to be mistaken for the steady and unbroken beamings which betoken health. The scene was again suddenly varied, and he beheld Mary Armstrong dying. The last change was rapidly approaching, and in speechless agony, her mother, the nurse, his own sister, and Walter, hung over her bed as if anxious to afford that comfort or relief which she alone seemed no longer to require. The mental misery which this imaginary

sight produced, was too powerful to be restrained, and he started from his recumbent posture with all the frenzy of despair; but in that never-to-be-forgotten moment, what was it that his opening eyes first rivetted themselves upon? Was it an illusion? or was it possible that he again beheld Mary Armstrong, but the same in dress only, as when they last parted? The cold and clammy dews of death now covered her alabaster forehead, while her lips, if they did not retain their former inviting richness, yet the faded charms which still seemed to linger round them, though scarcely reflecting the twilight glow of their meridian semblance, were the only indubitable vouchers of protracted life or recent death. But her eyes! Aye, her eyes! Those favourite tenements of the spirit wherein the gloomy tyrant first revels with unbounded riot, were indeed changed. Alas! all dark and lustreless were these once splendid thrones of light. The diamond within no longer rolled in a sphere sufficiently brilliant to supply that crystal stream which moistened his own cheek, as he breathed his last farewell upon her lips; and the half-closed lids did well to conceal what even a lover must have shrunk from. But list! Do his ears likewise play the truant with him, or does the illusive being really address him? "Henry, the ties which bound us together upon earth are now dissolved, yet I carry with me to the grave, the pledge of thy unbroken faith, nor have I sullied the virgin purity of my vow, through life and in death I have been only thine." The shade dwindled from his sight, he sprang from his couch with an almost supernatural frenzy, but it was of no avail: for whether it was indeed the spirit of Mary Armstrong, or an imaginary phantom of his own creation, it was gone for ever.

Completely bewildered by those feelings which result from the conflicting extremes of amazement and despair, he remained for a few minutes wholly unable to recollect the place where he stood; but roused at length by the noise above him, he again betook himself to his cabin, but not with the intention of courting repose. The novelty and bustle attending the scenes which he had lately been engaged in, and his own determination to avoid as much as possible any retrospections calculated to render him unhappy, had in a great measure prevented the obtrusion of any unpleasant reflections; and whenever he indulged himself in planning schemes of future happiness, it was only the most sunny side of the prospect which he suffered to linger in his memory. This mode of thinking and acting had not been so long practised without effecting in some degree the object for which it was intended; but when the imagery he had taken such pains to avoid was thus forced upon his recollection with every circumstance of accumulated aggravation of all that he most dreaded, it appeared that the efforts he had made, had shaded, but not weakened those impressions which the consummation of the worst he could possibly have apprehended were certain to produce: or rather, as the force of the arrow is owing to that precursory retrograde movement which gives elasticity to the bow, his studied attempts to divert the channel of his natural feelings, now, when the barrier which intervened was removed, occasioned a torrent which carried away everything before

it. Instead of endeavouring to reason upon the improbability of any supernatural mediation, or to ponder upon the delusion which such visionary dreams are apt to create, he gave unlimited credence to the belief that Mary Armstrong was no more, and that, however irreconcilable to the established tenets of Christianity, she had been permitted to unfold to him the dissolution of their mutual vow. Having freely indulged the bitter grief which such a belief was certain to create, he rose, dressed himself hastily, and hastened upon deck, in hopes of drowning for a while the remembrance of his own sorrows in the scenes which a calm and tranquil autumnal morning usually exhibits, either upon the land, or when borne upon the bosom of the wide and unexplorable ocean. The dusky twilight was gradually expanding into the brightness of morning; and as the vessel glided slowly and smoothly on the surface of the undulating waves, the breeze which gently swelled the extensive sheets of canvas, seemed pregnant with the germs of renovating health and increased energy for the future, and to bear along with it the bitterness of the past, even as the returning sun dispels the glittering traces of the preceding night.

The present thoughts of Henry Clementson were neither of a trivial, nor evanescent nature; yet he felt their weight gradually diminish as he watched the course of the wind, and listened to the remarks of the sailors as they estimated the duration of their yet remaining length of voyage, occasionally conversed with the captain who was already upon deck. Notwithstanding the fineness of the weather which had every prospect of continuance, their hazards and anxieties were not yet entirely at an end, for they were now directly in the tract of those numerous privateers which the proximity to their own range of coast enabled the French to fit out for the annoyance of our commerce during the long war which then raged between the rival nations. As soon as the day was so sufficiently advanced as to enable them to distinguish objects at any considerable distance, they perceived a vessel steering directly in their course; as the distance diminished her evident intention to speak with him was obvious, and the discoveries which his glass enabled the captain to make, left little doubt of the worst. The Balfour was a stout, firm vessel, of 200 tons burthen, was particularly well manned for a merchantman, and tolerably furnished with different descriptions of arms, amongst which were two or three swivels, and as many cannon. Her captain was by no means of a disposition to submit tamely, if resistance was at all likely to prove successful; the greater part of the property on board which belonged to him and Henry Clementson was likewise uninsured, and its loss was of the greatest importance to his future prospects; and the principal part of the crew, actuated as well by their national spirit as their own interest when contrasted with their aversion, to a precarious confinement in a French prison, cheerfully consented to be guided by the captain's discretion, as they were fully sensible, that if the vessel was really an enemy, any endeavours they could make to escape by sailing were entirely fruitless. Every preparation to defend the Balfour was accordingly made with the utmost activity; part of the sails were taken in, the decks cleared as far as circumstances would permit, the guns loaded and brought to those places where,

they were most likely to prove serviceable, the spare lumber placed so as partly to screen them from the small arms of the enemy, and the crew directed to such stations as their command deemed them severally best fitted for. All doubt was now soon at an end. The stranger perceiving their preparations, and their inability to avoid them, hoisted French colours, and fired a gun for them to lay to. It was not noticed; the Balfour continued to hold on her way, as the vessels were yet at some distance from each other, and her captain could discover that the decks of the privateer were so covered with men, that to prevent any very serious injury to his ship, the foe would probably endeavour to board as soon as they possibly could. The action however soon commenced in good earnest; several balls struck the sides and rigging of the privateer, and her captain eager to avail himself of his immense superiority in point of numbers, caused her to be run alongside the Balfour, grappled with, and instantly leapt on board of her, followed by a select party of the boldest of his men. These different manœuvres were not executed without considerable loss. Not expecting so vigorous a resistance, the decks of the assailing vessel were comparatively open to the fire of the Balfour, and some of the best marksmen on board the latter made terrible havoc by pouring in a successive discharge from large blunderbusses well loaded with small pistols bullets, or large buckshot, which, as soon as the distance permitted them, to take full effect, proved uncommonly destructive.

Among those most zealous in counselling resistance, and rendering it effective, was the hero of our tale. From the moment that the closing vessel was clearly made out to be an enemy, he had used every effort to keep up the hopes and spirits of his comrades; and as the action began, his activity and alacrity were the admiration of both Captain Harrison and his small but gallant crew: and as the privateer approached to fasten her grappling irons, the execution which attended every discharge from his cool and skilful aim as the ready-loaded small arms were handed to him, was distinctly visible. At all times fearless of danger the peculiarity of his present situation made him feel none of those awful qualms which many equally bold, and which himself under other circumstances would have felt, previous to, and during the first discharges: but now, the visions of the night, joined to the natural pride of his true British spirit made him doubly bold and energetic. It had instantly struck his distempered fancy that Mary Armstrong was not only undoubtedly lost to him for ever, but that her appearance was likewise a warning of his own approaching death, and the full accomplishment of all that Ellen Anderson had at different times forewarned him of, and goaded by these impressions such an intimation was by no means unwelcome to him. The loss of the property he had at hazard, he valued not much; but captivity, and the thoughts of the suspense it must inevitably occasion, was in his present frame of mind far worse than death itself; and if die he must, he was determined to die with honour. No tainted whisperings detrimental to his courage should ever be mingled with the recollection of his name! But his friends at home should hear from those who survived the conflict, that Henry

Clementson had fallen like a hero, and had died as he had lived, unconquered save only by his own passions, and by that doom which it is impossible for the bravest to turn aside. The trial was nigh at hand; a number of the enemy, headed by their daring leader, had boarded the *Balfour* at a place a few yards distance from that where he had poured destruction amongst them; and the crew, intimidated by numbers, were retreating, and reluctantly yielding up to the foe the possession of the vessel, when Henry quitting the station he had hitherto occupied, flew to their assistance, and sprung the enemy, who, secure of conquest, had partly dispersed themselves, with the ferocity of a tiger. Two or three of the first party he attacked, taken rather unawares, fell instant victims to his fury; and that timidity generally attending any unlooked-for resistance, made the rest recoil from the daring assailant, and call aloud for the assistance of their comrades. The call was promptly obeyed. Their valliant commander had witnessed the circumstance, and immediately advanced with the design of cutting down the slaughterer of his men. He met no weak or irresolute foe: their weapons clashed against each other with appalling violence, and a close succeeding, the captain of the privateer was dashed upon the deck of his fancied prize with a force which seemed superhuman to his surprised followers. The scene was now completely changed, Captain Harrison and the boldest of his crew eagerly advanced to the assistance of Henry, who, without allowing them breathing time, rushed upon the panic-stricken enemy as an hungry lion plunges amongst a herd of timid oxen, and dealt destruction around him with a fury as swift as it was fatal; and being nobly seconded by those whom his valour had roused to the like daring exertions, nearly one-half of those who had a few minutes before considered the *Balfour* as a secure conquest, lay stretched upon her decks, and the rest deeming themselves fortunate in being able to regain their own vessel, removed every impediment to the separation of the two ships lest the privateer should be boarded in return. This, however, was far too hazardous an attempt for Captain Harrison to think of; his own escape from a capture which he had once deemed inevitable, he thought little less than miraculous; and he was consequently glad enough to be quit of his adversary without further molestation. The crew of the privateer, it subsequently appeared, were of the same opinion; for excepting a few straggling cannon shot which did no mischief, the vessels rapidly separated without further hostilities.

But it was impossible that so gallant a repulse could be effected without considerable bloodshed upon both sides, although the principal loss rested with the privateer, nine of whose crew, along with their brave, but unfortunate captain, remained on board the *Balfour*, all of whom were either killed outright or mortally wounded; a number, which added to those shot or maimed previous to the act of boarding, and the wounded that regained their own vessel, bore ample testimony to the courage and determination of their adversaries. On board the *Balfour*, one gallant fellow was killed, and another died a few hours afterwards, while independent of injuries of smaller consequence, three, (amongst whom was Henry Clementson) were dangerously and severely wounded. Henry had received various wounds, but

the most serious were a deep cut upon the head which laid bare a part of his skull, and a pistol bullet which had entered his right breast in a slanting direction, and had only been prevented from reaching the lungs by the intervention of his ribs, one or two of which it fractured, and these weakening its force, it remained in the wound till extracted by an incision through the skin directly under the pit of his arm. As soon as it became apparent that the enemy had no intention of renewing the action, Captain Harrison lost no time in attending to the wounded men, and affording them such assistance as it was in his power to render. He dressed their wounds in the best manner he was able, and then directing his attention towards his late enemies, he ordered such bodies as exhibited no signs of life to be thrown overboard, while those still living were attended to with all possible care. All appearances of the late contest were then obliterated; and the corpse of the man already dead, being carefully cleansed from blood and dirt, was wrapped up in some of the clothes he had once owned, that it might be buried on shore; as the captain had little doubt of reaching home before the body became offensive. This painful duty he was under the necessity of repeating during the day. The man of whose recovery there were no hopes died the same afternoon; and in the course of the night, two, out of the four Frenchman, closed a lingering and painful existence. As the wind was favourable, and the vessel rapidly approaching towards her destination, the bodies were suffered to remain on board; and at six o'clock the following evening, the Balfour arrived safely at Liverpool.

Notwithstanding this state of mental and corporeal disquietude, the wounds of Henry healed so fast, that in two or three days he was able to accompany Capt. Harrison alongside the Balfour, where the bustle and activity attending the discharge of her cargo, served both to amuse him, and divert his mind from the gloomy and unceasing contemplation of those incidents which he regarded as so many links in the chain of his future destiny. This change was however doomed to be of every limited duration; on his return to his lodgings, he met his old acquaintance Will Sinelair; with whom as the first Cumberland person he had seen since his arrival excepting his friend, the captain, he heartily shook hands; and feeling some curiosity to know what had brought him to Liverpool, how long he had been there, or what length of time he intended to remain, he invited him to his lodgings, an invitation which the other instantly accepted.

Had Henry formed any suspicion that Will's journey was connected in the remotest degree with the tidings he now so anxiously expected, he would at once have read them in the sorrowful and perplexed countenance, and unwonted taciturnity of the once jovial and care-dispelling Sinelair: but thinking that the concern so visibly pictured in his face, resulted from his untoward circumstances, he kindly asked him "If any misfortune had befallen him since he had left Cumberland?" "Why no, I can't say that exactly," was the short and unsatisfactory reply. "I am glad of that, Will," rejoined Henry. "I was afraid by your looks, that something very unpleasant had occurred. But how long have you been in Liverpool?" "Some

two or three hours may be. I came last tide in the trader from Whitehaven." "Good God!" said the querist, entirely, thrown off his guard by this unlooked-for answer, "You can then tell me news, indeed! How are all my friends? Had they received my letter?" "They had, Harry; and one from Capt. Harrison likewise, which acquainted them with all that had happened: and there needed not any tidings of your illness, to make your friends sad enough, believe me." "But you see I am better! Tell me at once what is the matter. How is Ned Wilson and his family?" "As well in bodily health and substance as when you left them. But—" "Walter Armstrong!" exclaimed Henry, eagerly, "how is he?" "Harry," said Sinclair, mournfully, "You said *Walter*, but he was not uppermost in your thoughts. I was the first to tell you news once before which you did not expect to hear; but I like not my present task. Consider, I beseech you" "Tell me," interrupted Henry, with frightful vehemence, "when Mary Armstrong died!" "I did not *say* that she was dead," replied Sinclair, calmly, as a tear which did honour to his heart trickled down his cheek; but here is a letter for you. I know you will both feel and act like a man; I will leave you till you have read it, and then return and inform you of such further particulars as I am acquainted with." And with a delicacy of feeling by no means uncommon amongst the lower classes, Sinclair left the room and closed the door after him.

The letter of Edward Wilson was of considerable length. It commenced by affectionately assuring Henry that nothing but an hourly expected addition to his family could have withheld him from immediately setting out for Liverpool; as well to satisfy himself of his recovery, as to disclose to him that intelligence which he knew would greatly afflict him, he meant the death of Mary Armstrong, which Will Sinclair would probably acquaint him with previous to the delivery of his letter, "The only mitigation," continued he, "I shall urge of your sorrow for the loss of one so tenderly and justly beloved by all who knew her, is the recollection of what is due to yourself. No selfish consideration, my dear Henry, should make us arraign the decrees of Him who ordereth all for the best; let us therefore take care that while we grieve for one so deserving of our regret, we sin not by impiously murmuring at those dispensations which may be wisely ordained for our everlasting benefit. No, rather let us profit by that resignation evinced by her, whom I have no doubt, is now a Saint in Heaven. Her fortitude in that trying hour which none can turn aside, was the result of the consciousness of a life spent in comparative purity, joined with the conviction that we are of ourselves insufficient to merit a salvation which can only be attained by a perfect reliance upon that Redeemer, who by his own death, pointed out a secure path for such as firmly trust in Him. Your sister was present at the awful moment, and was intrusted with her last message to you. She was, at her own particular request, interred at Arleodan, and carried with her to the grave, a ring which she received from you, and wore as a token of unshaken fidelity to the vow she had plighted you." The letter concluded by a strong request, that as soon as his health permitted, he would lose no time in returning home.

There was one singular circumstance in this epistle tendering strongly to confirm that unaccountable presentiment which had for some time taken firm root in the mind of Henry, and which indeed he had accustomed himself to regard with a kind of superstitious reverence. In referring to the time and date of Mary's death, it tallied exactly with his own remarkable visionary dream on the morning of the engagement, a circumstance which however borne out by many well-authenticated corroborative instances in different ages, the very wisest have found much easier to endeavour to explain away, than rationally account for. Whatever credit may be due to these phantasies of the mind, whether real or illusory I pretend not to discern; certain it is, that the steadfast belief he had always entertained of the reality of his vision, had in a great measure prepared Henry for the worst. Yet notwithstanding he harboured within him, "that sorrow which passed show," he calmly read Edward Wilson's letter over again, folded it up, and endeavoured to receive Sinclair who did not allow him much time to ponder upon its contents, with seeming tranquillity. "Well, Will," said he, as soon as that chosen messenger of evil tidings re-entered the room, "it is as I surmised, Mary Armstrong is no more, and Ned Wilson wishes me to return home; when will you be ready to go?" "Whenever it suits you." "What? have you so soon settled the business which brought you to Liverpool? Truly you have not suffered the grass to grow under your feet, and must have been pretty fortunate besides." "As for grass, Harry," said Sinclair, glad to find him so composed, "the d—l a pile I have set my foot on since I crossed Ned Wilson's paddock to gain the high-road. There is no mystery in avoiding it either in the streets or quays of Whitehaven, or this town, and I suppose no such vegetable would thrive on shipboard. And for business, why lookye, Harry, your brother-in-law could not well be spared at this time, and was afraid that his letter might not reach you, and that as you were very badly hurt, you would be nothing the worse of an old acquaintance to travel with in case you should be desirous to go home: and so I am here." "I thank Ned Wilson for his care, and thee for thy kindness, Will. Indeed I am far, very far from well; but we will lose no time in finding out the best mode of reaching Cumberland." Upon inquiry they soon ascertained that there were two or three vessels ready to sail for Whitehaven the first tolerable wind, and as the pain and recent closing of his wounds rendered Henry unable to walk on foot, or bear jolting upon horseback, a passage with some of them, seemed in his present situation most eligible. Accordingly, next day the wind proving favourable, Henry entrusted the care of settling his concerns to his friend Capt. Harrison, and found himself once more upon his return to Cumberland.

Early on the following evening the vessel in which they had embarked reached Whitehaven; and Henry, leaving Sinclair to take care of the package he had brought with him, instantly set out for the abode of his brother-in-law. This arrangement was not altogether agreeable to Will, who did not consider his invalid companion capable of undertaking such a journey alone; but as he saw that he was fully resolved to travel by himself, there remained no alternative but acquiescence.

In fact, the bustle of the voyage, and the incessant inquiries of his companion, had left Henry little time either for rest or reflection, and he felt a strong desire to avail himself of some such an opportunity as his walk homewards afforded in order to compose his disturbed thoughts, and arm himself for the future, before he met his friends, but it was not till the peaceful mansion of his nearest relative again broke upon his aching sight, that the tumultuous feelings of his soul subsided into a collected retrospection of the past, and the changes which a single year had produced, fully roused him to the magnitude of the contrast. The pleasing visions of hope, and the presence of her whom he loved, pleasures which could impart happiness even by anticipation, no longer animated a breast, then the arena of health, strength, and activity; but now, his prospects for ever blasted by the final and lasting eclipse of that sun which gilded them, emaciated in form, and altered external appearance, he seemed no longer the same Henry Clementson whose unrivalled prowess, and unshaken courage, made him the pride of his friends and the terror of his enemies. He stopped and gazed on the habitation before him with feelings of mingled joy and bitterness: but his pleasure was of that gloomy and bitter description which arises from the consolatory reflection that those we esteem are in possession of that "pearl without price" which providence hath denied to ourselves, and the conviction that our days of sorrow will not be of long duration. "Yes," said he, as he raised his hand to his feverish brow, to endeavour to allay the pain occasioned by the violent throbbing within, and looked upon the gleaming windows of the cottage before him, "long may happiness choose thee for an asylum, thou dear abode of domestic bliss! when he who once shared in thy pure and rational joys slumbers in the grave! But why should I give way to fruitless and unbounded grief? It is true that a home like that shall never know me for its master, no beloved partner such as I once hoped to have claimed at my return receive me with a smile of tender affection, or rosy children welcome my approach with innocent and endearing rapture; yet the doom that I feel awaits me, shall find me I trust, neither an unprepared, or unwilling victim. If Henry Clementson be the last of his name and family, he will leave no wife to mourn, or child to bewail his death; nor will those who may embalm his memory with tears of friendship or affection, have any cause to blush at the recollection of his name. Notwithstanding his endeavours to calm the perturbation of his mind, and to regain his wonted resolution, it was with tottering and unequal steps, arising as well from the intensity of his feelings, as from the illness and fatigue under which he laboured, that Henry approached, and knocked gently at the door which he had so often entered under more happy auspices. The signal was readily attended to, for the master of the peaceful tenement had not yet retired to rest. "Who is it that knocks," was the prudent, yet fearless demand. "A friend. Do you not remember that knock, Ned?" "Ah Henry! I did not think it possible it could be you! This is indeed far beyond my most sanguine expectations." The bolts were quickly withdrawn and Henry again found himself most cordially welcomed into the house where he had passed so many happy hours.

It was not until the two friends had advanced within the steady light afforded by a large tallow candle, which firmly entrenched in its old fashioned wooden socket, blazed upon the table, that Edward had full leisure to remark the altered appearance of the once healthy and athletic Henry Clementson. Owing to the great quantity of blood he had lost, and the severe pain occasioned by his wounds, his face appeared sharp and thin, his lips pale, and his eyes almost hidden beneath their arched foldings retained nothing of that spirit and vivacity which once animated them. The shock which this alteration produced in the manly and sympathizing countenance of his brother-in-law, was instantly perceived by Henry. "Yes, Ned! I am indeed sadly changed since we parted, and another change equally great and unwelcome has occurred since my departure; but God only knows what is best for us, and therefore it is our duty to submit to his decrees. But where is my sister?" "The children of this world cometh, and goeth, you know Henry; we have had an addition to our family since I wrote to you. My wife must not see you just now, but I will go and acquaint her with the tidings of your return. A good night's sleep will, I hope, effect a considerable change for the better with you both, and enable you to meet with more tranquillity. Come my dear fellow! you shall partake of some refreshment, and go to bed; for you are both ill, and sadly fatigued; and we will have some medical advice to-morrow." To this well-meant advice Henry submitted in silence; and after attentively joining in the evening prayers of his pious friend, and devoutly resigning himself to the will of his Creator, the anxiety he had lately undergone joined to the satisfaction he derived from finding himself once more in the bosom of his affectionate relatives, alike contributed to yield him that repose which he had so often sought for in vain.

The breast of Henry Clementson was meanwhile the theatre of many conflicting passions. The pressing remonstrances of the captain had prevailed upon him to keep himself warm, and to avoid all bodily exertions on account of his wounds; but mental rest was far beyond the pale of his prescriptions. The acute pain occasioned by his wounds, the distress arising from the recollection of the lives which had been lost, and his anxiety to learn what was really the state of his concerns in Cumberland, all concerned to make him restless and unhappy; and the time which intervened between the engagement, and his arrival at Liverpool, seemed drawn out to a length far beyond what those who have never been subjected to similar sufferings can have any conception of. As soon as the Balfour was safe in port, his attentive friend procured excellent lodgings, nor rested till he had seen him take possession of them, and summoned one of the most skilful surgeons of the place to examine into the state of his wound. The examination proved as favourable as the captain had expected; and Henry himself lost no time in writing to his brother-in-law announcing his arrival, and requesting an immediate answer. The succeeding day the two men who had so bravely fallen were interred side by side, and after the funeral, the principal owner of the Balfour called upon Henry, and told him, that as he understood the preservation of the vessel was owing to his courage and valour, he was

resolved that nothing should be exacted for the freight of the property he had on board; and that he himself, and his partners, were determined to present him with some other token of their esteem for his behaviour. Henry thanked him for his civility, but desired that the full amount they intended so liberally to bestow upon him, might be divided amongst the relatives of the men who were killed, according to the discretion of the ownery; and the gentleman took his leave of him, in high admiration of his magnanimity and generosity.

Although Henry could have been well content to have fallen in the desperate conflict in which he had been engaged with the natural enemies of his country, he had none of that pining and unmanly system of selfish complaint about him, which will sometimes make even a coward not only wish, but seek that release from his own hand, which his timid spirit would not dare to hazard in bold and open combat. Whenever he dwelt upon that common lot of all mankind, it was with a strong conviction that his day was not far distant, but still it was an event which he awaited with the manly resignation of a noble and feeling mind, as far removed from unavailing regret, as torpid insensibility. The morning, therefore, found him much altered for the better; a sound and tranquil sleep had had its usual invigorating effect upon an excellent constitution, and more collected than he had ventured to hope, he received and returned the affectionate congratulations of his sister upon his return home. The news of his arrival soon spread round the neighbourhood; and the frequent visitors who successively arrived to see and welcome him back again, contributed both to amuse and rouse him to an exertion which effectually prevented that despondency always attendant upon a mind debilitated by illness and embittered by disappointment. The next day brought Walter Armstrong and his mother; and while Henry received them with a firmness which proved the ascendancy which he had acquired over his feelings, the involuntary tear that rolled down his cheek as his eye rested upon the sable habiliments of the grave, fully proved that his affection for her whom they so forcibly recalled to his remembrance had undergone no change. However, in the course of the day, the subject still nearest to his heart, the loss of her he so ardently loved, was as freely discussed as the recent accouchment of Mrs. Wilson rendered prudent. From a clear and unimpassioned combination of circumstances, it appeared that Mary Armstrong died of a consumption, originally brought on by a severe cold which she had contracted during her close and almost unceasing attendance upon her father; to which, perhaps, the then delicate state of her health, arising from that extreme agitation of mind which his recent conduct towards her, and the untimely manner of his death, might tend to contribute. It is true that it was not till after the period of Henry's departure that any serious apprehensions were entertained for her recovery, but the premature blight of the fairest rose is not the less certain, although it may bloom for a while after the worm has chosen its crimson foldings for the scene of its ravages. "The morning on which she died, Henry," said his sister, "she removed the ring you gave her to her marriage finger; nor shall I ever forget the sweet and placid smile of resignation with which she

accosted me! 'Tell him,' said she, 'that I placed this here, that I might carry with me even to the grave a bridal token of unalterable fidelity to the vow I plighted. Yes! though the pledge mutually given was a strong one, say that Mary amply redeemed and remembered her promise. Through life and in death my love is unchanged. I need not bid you remember me to him. That I am satisfied were needless; but when you tell him that his happiness was mingled in my latest prayers, remind him, that as Mary is lost to him for ever, it is his duty to strive to conquer a sorrow which can only prove as fruitless as unavailing.' I have now delivered my message to you, my dear brother. I know your heart, and cannot therefore wish you to forget what is past; but while you *feel* like a *lover*, endeavour to *act* like a *Christian*." During this conversation, the left hand of Henry was placed on his manly brow, with all the agonizing pressure of silent and extreme anguish, and likewise served to shade the grief which it so forcibly portrayed; while his right gently drew from his bosom the trinket which now contained all that remained of what had belonged to, and adorned the person of the once lovely Mary Armstrong. "Yes," said he, as he gazed with streaming eyes upon the precious pledge, "thy example shall not be lost upon me; for through life and in death will I remember thee!" and not daring to trust his voice any longer, he rose hastily and left the apartment.

"I do not like Henry's quiet and determined manner of proceeding," observed his sister as soon as he had left the room. "It betokens either a sorrow which will preclude all hopes of his recovery, or a fixed resolution to leave this country for ever. That tie which alone could have bound his ardent spirit to the tranquil pleasures of domestic life is now broken; and the scene which continually reminds him of departed joys is one too inimical to his future happiness to permit his long continuance in this vicinity." This remark was grounded on too correct a knowledge of Henry's disposition to prove inaccurate. Although the excellence of his constitution, and his natural invigorating habits, rapidly restored him to comparative health and strength, yet that corroding vacuum of the mind which betrays the irresolution of the unhappy owner by preventing his adherence to any permanent system of acting, and thereby dries up the source of contentment, kept him inwardly restless and dissatisfied. This a soul like Henry Clementson's could not endure long. He determined either to endeavour to remedy the evil by a change of scene, or to lose it for ever; and as the most bustling life evidently afforded the greatest scope for effecting his purpose, he no sooner learnt that the Balfour was engaged as a transport in the expedition which was fitting out to act against the Spanish settlements in the Western Indies, under the command of the Earl of Albemarle, than availing himself of the interest of her owners, he obtained leave to serve therein; and Will Sinclair, spurred on as well by his attachment to Henry as a desire to visit foreign countries, determined to accompany him.

The day previous to his departure for Portsmouth, where the troops destined for the expedition were already assembling, he visited Salter for the last time, and carried with him such presents as he judged

would be most acceptable to Mrs. Armstrong, and his steady friend, the poor old nurse, who was almost broken-hearted; and received in return a handkerchief which had belonged to Mary. With Walter he exchanged watches; and when his friend remarked the great difference in point of value, he observed, with a gloomy smile, "Never mind that, Walter; it is good enough for the Spaniard who may chance to knock my brains out. My only wish is, that I may have an opportunity of making him earn it." Their parting was one of mutual tenderness and sorrow; augmented doubtless by the full persuasion that they would never meet again upon earth.

But Henry chose not the direct path which led to the abode of his brother-in-law. His mind was bent upon once more retracing those scenes the remembrance of which were ever present to his imagination. He wandered slowly up the lonely and darksome valley of Thistle-gill, then faintly illumined by the feeble light of a few glimmering stars. Having reached the cave, he stopped and looked round him, his thoughts full of that part of the tale of Ellen Anderson which alluded to the supposed murder of Grace Foster, and the current stories of her re-appearance. But when the waking mind is upheld by that desperate courage which would rather welcome than shun a supernatural visitor, it is seldom indeed that the imagination will lend form and substance to these invisible beings; and Henry proceeded with steady pace, and busy thoughts, over the race-ground at Arlecdon, where first the form of Mary Armstrong, all grace and beauty, fixed his careless eye, and became the loadstone of his hitherto unstable affections. The memory of the hours they had passed together glanced shortly over his mind, shorter than even the literal and mournful words of the bard, "Short is the passage to the friendly tomb," for before Henry traversed the few hundred intervening yards, his thoughts had reverted to the thin covering of earth which alone divided him from what had once been the object of his tenderest love.

He stretched himself at full length upon the half green mound which marked her final resting place, and unrestrained by living presence, gave full vent to the long-repressed torrent of bitter grief which dwelt within him, and then rose and gazed wildly around. "All hail!" said he, "thou pure and gentle shade which deigned to reveal to me the first tidings of thy dissolution! If yet thou art permitted to revisit those scenes where rests the form which once contained thine immortal spirit, behold me here! For the last time I look upon the turf which covers thee; but while life remains, thy image shall dwell within my heart, and thy precious pledge of unshaken love find a refuge above it. A warmer bed, or the roaring waters, will soon cover the form of thy lover; and may the same supreme and benignant being that witnessed our parting vows permit my parting spirit to hold blissful communion with thine own in those mansions where sorrow hath no existence." His eye rested for a moment upon the silent tenement of departed mortality, and turning slowly towards the gate through which he had entered the churchyard, his lingering feet once more sought that path which they were destined never to retrace again. The next morning he left White-

haven in company with Sinclair, after a parting with his relatives much easier to imagine than describe.

It was during my residence at Arlecdon in the summer of 1818, that I observed, one sultry forenoon, when crossing the church-yard by the beaten path from the north, a venerable old man, seemingly engaged in tracing out some precise place, beneath which I conjectured rested the mortal relics of his ancestors. I likewise judged by his dress, which was unusually neat and primitive, as well as by the circumstance of his person being altogether unknown to me, that he was a stranger in this part of the county; a surmise which I discovered to be well grounded, when on accosting him I found by his dialect, that he had passed the greater part of his life in the most eastern parts of Cumberland. Old men whether gentle or simple, when in good health and spirits are naturally garrulous, and my new acquaintance formed no exception to the general rule. I myself am nothing blate in that respect; and my answer to a long string of questions respecting the ancient and modern customs of the neighbourhood, and the fore-elders of many different families pleased him so much that we soon became tolerably intimate. "Young man," said he, "accidental business hath caused me to re-visit Whitehaven after an absence of nearly sixty years, and I have come here to-day to strengthen my remembrance of olden times, by a last view of the earth which covers the bones of my father, and a beloved sister. She was betrothed to a gallant young fellow of the name of Cleinentson, and the story of their short acquaintance, and the incidents interwoven with it, tend to elucidate some of those events which you speak of as vague and uncertain rumours. Your conversation and appearance are both superior to the generality of country people, therefore if you choose to sit down here I will tell you their history." I did not well know what to think of this compliment in regard to my language, because as to my appearance, it was all "my eye and Betty Martin!" for I was dressed in a white flannel suit, nothing the *whiter* mind for its frequent visits to the regions below. I mean no allusions to any *other world*, but simply the lowest parts of *this* which can boast of much company, the bottom of a coal pit. Being however very anxious to hear the promised story, I put the very best construction upon the matter, and invited him to my dwelling, which had in ancient times been the residence of the rectors of Arlecdon; and the old gentleman and I spent a very pleasant day together, after which I accompanied him down to Whitehaven. The precise story he told me I have partly augmented by references which it enabled me to draw from other authentic sources, and the letters and documents which before we parted, he put into my possession. Of these, the story of Ellen Anderson is the most bulky. It cost me a good deal of decyphering, being rather tattered withal, and it is at this time scarcely legible: however such as it is, if any gentleman chooses to honour it with a perusal, it is very much at their service. I was enabled to elucidate that part of it in the most satisfactory manner which referred to the disappearance of Grace Foster. A few years before, a number of labourers who were employed in blasting and breaking up the loose and protuberating rocks of limestone in Thistlegill, discovered the re-

mains of a human skeleton. The bones were supposed to have belonged to a female; and what appeared to my old friend quite convincing, a bill-hook crusted with blood, was found lying close beside it. "The ways of heaven," observed he, "are inscrutable. Though the murderer may sometimes escape worldly justice, he cannot elude the searching eye of divine providence. I was told that Will Fletcher could not die in peace until he had confessed the murder." He then told me that Ned Wilson soon after Henry's departure fell joint heir to a considerable estate in the eastern part of the county near to where he himself had then fixed his residence, and that by the sale of his patrimonial property in this vicinity, he was enabled to compass the whole, which was now in the possession of his eldest son who had married one of his own daughters. "Well," said I, "and does the predictions of old Ellen hold true in your own case?" "My wife is living," replied he, "and likely to survive me; but Ned Wilson and his wife are both dead, though they lived very happy together until they had seen their children's children grow up around them. Will Sinclair was the last survivor (excepting myself) whose name appears in the narrative alluded to. He died last winter full of years, aye, and glory too, for Will was raised to the rank of sergeant, and enjoyed a pension for the last thirty years of his life. Many a long night have we beguiled with tales of "auld lang syne," and the exploits and death of Henry Clementson at the taking of Havannah." "He perished then in that glorious expedition," said I. "He did," replied he. "He was shot through the heart at the very conclusion of the final storming of the Moro, after cutting down the brave Marquis de Gonsales, the second in command, with his own hand. Will Sinclair saw him fall, but before he reached the place, the gallant spirit had fled for ever. His place of rest was among the bravest and noblest of those who fell; and what is very remarkable, the ball which penetrated his heart, shivered the trinket in his bosom which contained that cherished plait of my sister's hair which she presented to him at their last parting. His watch is still in my possession, and this is the last letter he ever wrote. It was directed to the care of Ned Wilson, but as it was addressed, and even contained separate paragraphs for all the grown-up inmates of both families, (not forgetting Mary's nurse who just survived long enough to hear it read) it finally remained in my possession." I cannot pretend to remember the whole letter, but the following short extract the reader may rest assured is strictly literal. The date was sometime in August, I forget the precise day, 1762.

"This my dear friends is the last letter I shall ever write, the last direct intelligence you will ever receive from me, for when next you hear of Henry Clementson he will have ceased to live. In two short hours, a strong body of chosen troops will be drawn up for the final assault of this proud castle which hath been so bravely defended, and the regiment to which I belong is destined to lead the way. Many of my gallant comrades are enjoying a repose which will probably be their last upon earth, but I will never sleep more. I have seen a form, I have heard a voice, both too well known and too much beloved to be ever forgotten, which warned me of my fate,

and when an angel speaks, who shall doubt its truth? Say that it was the illusive fancy of my disturbed imagination! Perhaps it may so,—but its reality is firmly ingrafted upon a heart wherein fear hath no lurking place, and a few short hours will confirm my assertion. Farewell then for ever. Death, a glorious death is truly welcome to me! and the time yet at my disposal shall be spent in preparing myself for it.” The good old man shook hands with me at parting, and in the course of the following winter I received certain intelligence of the death of Walter Armstrong.

THE END.

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